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ABSTRACT

This dissertation addresses the need for community college administration to consider the opinions, needs, and perceptions of faculty when instituting educational change. Governments and colleges are tending toward market-driven responses to community needs. Faculty often perceive these business model innovations as short sighted, meant to introduce quick change for popular approval and retention of political power. Faculty tend to lose influence in the move toward running colleges as businesses. The author uses a phenomenological approach to the study, which looks at the context of the field site and the participants, presents case studies from 16 faculty members at 2 Oregon colleges representing all areas of the liberal arts, and culminates in a group discussion with 6 of the original 16 faculty members. Faculty members in the study argued that they were willing to implement changes, but that they expected administration to provide the time and space to talk about change strategies collectively and to plan ahead. Suggestions were that administration include faculty in every step of the change process, listen to what they have to say, incorporate faculty suggestions, and provide faculty with support and recognition. Student needs, rather than the consumer aspect of education, should always be a central priority. (Contains 109 references. Research instrument appended.) (NB)

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REFLECTIONS ON CHANGE: A COMMUNITY-COLLEGE FACULTY PERSPECTIVE

by

Katherine Zmetana

A DISSERTATION

submitted to

Oregon State University

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Presented March 27, 2002

Commencement June 2002

REFLECTIONS ON CHANGE:
A COMMUNITY COLLEGE FACULTY PERSPECTIVE

by Katherine Zmetana

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AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

Katherine Zmetana for the degree of Doctor of Education, presented March 27, 2002.

Title: Reflections on Change: A Community College Faculty Perspective.

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George H. Copa

This phenomenological research study focused on educational change as perceived by 16 Liberal Arts faculty members at a Pacific Northwest community college. Research data were collected through in-depth dialogic interviews and a follow-up dialogue session with six participants. The principal guiding research questions comprised the following:

1. ***What is the context of the community college?*** The institution is facing severe budgetary restrictions, widening diversity of students, the implementation of new technologies and distance learning, changing faculty and administrator roles, competition from the private sector, and the redefining of the community college role.

2. ***What is the background of the faculty participants?*** In the past, faculty have experienced a collegial culture and a shared sense of purpose, which no longer seems to exist. Their values are deeply connected to the social responsibilities of education and student needs, which they feel is at odds with the trend toward commodification of education.

3. ***What are faculty's perceptions of change and its effects?*** Change is constant; and instructors adapt incrementally. Mandated changes are seen to have fuzzy meanings and hidden agendas, which sometimes go against the core values of higher education.

4. ***What do faculty want?*** Faculty want to wrestle with the issues and solutions for dealing with change collaboratively, and they need the time and space to do so. They also want administrators to hear their voice, and to include faculty priorities in educational decision-making.

Faculty participants had clear ideas on ways that would make the implementation of change more successful and meaningful in their lives and in the future of their community college:

- Make change for a worthy or merited purpose.
- Listen to what faculty have to say.
- Allow faculty to wrestle with the challenges.
- Provide faculty with support and recognition.
- Keep student needs as a central priority.
- Maintain the human values and social purpose of education.

Most important, faculty feel that the human element cannot be discounted or forgotten in the rush to transform higher education, for faculty are the ones charged with the implementation of most change initiatives and they must deal with the consequences.

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My heartfelt thanks go out to George Copa, an exceptional professor and human being, who was always there when I needed him. During the writing process I discovered him to be even more of a perfectionist than I, and although it drove me crazy at times, it was just what I needed to get the best out of me. Warren Suzuki, the Zen professor, changed my view of the academic world one day during a walk at Silver Falls; I will remember that moment for the rest of my life. Ruth Stiehl and Betty Duvall, two strong women, are the reasons I ended up at Oregon State University in the first place. Colleagues, and kindred spirits, of Cohort 7 enriched my life immeasurably during the entire educational process; and without the constant support and love of the naughty-nighty triumvirate, I might not have made my way out of the woods with my sanity intact.

I would like to thank my committee members, particularly Bonnie Longnion, for her unrelenting optimism and nurturing guidance, and John McKendry, for paving the way through the field research process. I am grateful to the faculty participants who took time out from their impossible schedules, in the spirit of collegiality, to contribute to this research and to make their voices heard. And finally, I would like to give special recognition to Artur Bubiak, who suffered as much as I did throughout the interminably long hours devoted to this dissertation. Kocham cię, psiątko.

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for Sylvia

REFLECTIONS ON CHANGE: A COMMUNITY COLLEGE FACULTY PERSPECTIVE

CHAPTER 1: SIGNIFICANCE & FOCUS OF THE STUDY

Change is a generative process; it must be accomplished by people. And the people who must accomplish it deserve and require much more consideration than most designers of educational improvements give them (Shaban, quoted in Evans, 1996, p. xii).

Community colleges are by nature in a constant state of change. They were founded in the industrial era to meet the social, political, and economic needs of the 20th century and have responded to events such as the GI Bill, the race for space, and racial integration. Now, 100 years after their inception, they are facing change on an even greater scale with the ushering in of the knowledge age. Technology is credited with transforming the world faster than the industrial revolution ever did and in ways yet to come that can only be imagined (Rifkin, 2000; Handy, 1998).

To respond to the needs of the 21st century, experts have been calling for a transformation of the community college, and even to education itself (Karabell, 2000; McClenney, 1998; O'Banion, 1995; Dolence & Norris, 1995). Organizational change experts, such as Oblinger and Verville (1998), have recommended running educational institutions like a business in order to better manage the bottom line. Educational experts have recommended implementing pedagogical initiatives, in order to provide more student-centered learning (Barr & Tagg, 1995). Many recommendations have been adopted, and even mandated, by governments, community college administrators, and boards, but the implementation of most initiatives rests on the shoulders of faculty; for they are the most intimately involved in the teaching and learning that is core to the purpose of the community college.

This study is about the perceptions of community college faculty regarding educational change—how it affects them personally and professionally, and what they feel is important to consider in bringing about change. The purpose of this research is

to give their voices a place to be heard, for they have been all too often ignored or discounted in the calls for restructuring and transforming higher education.

Significance of the Study

In the 21st century, learning spans an entire lifetime. The current reality is that much of what is learned today is outdated before a student graduates (Rifkin, 2000). Lifelong learning requires a long-term view of the workforce and of an individual's needs so that educational programs and opportunities can prepare for the future rather than maintain the status quo (Methven & Hansen, 1997, p.11). As Vaill (1996) explains it, "people's thinking about learning is in a period of 'extraordinary ferment' " (p. 41).

While the world has moved on to a new, global understanding and transformation of the economy, higher education has continued in much the same tradition as it always has. Like most of today's institutions, colleges still follow the industrial-age model: "hierarchies organized on command and control, people viewed as resources to be used to meet the institutions' objectives, managers who sit at the top apparently in control" (Society for Organizational Learning, May 1998). However, this form of autocratic management is no longer the ideal model, since employees expect more and more to be involved in decision-making and planning. Furthermore, as many leaders will attest and many change experts will warn, it is "impossible to get people to implement a management strategy that is inconsistent with their values" (Birnbaum, 2000, p. xii). Implementing any change requires that everyone involved collaborate in new ways to deal with these changes positively and comfortably. Systems theory recognizes that all parts are vital to any system. As Bohm (1985) has said so aptly: "Something can be a part only if there is a whole of which it can be a part" (p.21).

Background

Faculty have been accused of inertia (Hansen, 2000; Steinberg, 1999); however, tremendous upheaval in the role of faculty has taken place in the last decade and faculty are, on the whole, ill prepared to fulfill all the new demands and expectations (Bergquist, 1992; Corbin, 1998). "Subject matter and information are increasing, learners' demographics are changing, technology is providing alternative means of

instructional delivery, and instructors' traditional roles are dissolving. Faculty find themselves charged with redesigning curriculum, offering alternate delivery methods, assessing prior learning, accommodating diverse learning styles and abilities, and providing additional other services. All are activities that greatly increase workload and time commitment. Not surprisingly, many faculty react with apprehension and resistance. They have seen it all before—the "flavor of the month" which has characterized change over the last two decades—and feel that they are being used. Many, if not most, change initiatives are notorious for not producing the results for which they were intended (Isaacs, 1999; Boyett & Boyett, 1998; Pew Foundation, 1997). In fact, it is estimated that 50% to 75% of all change initiatives launched in the 1980s and the 1990s failed to achieve their objectives (Boyett & Boyett, 1998, p. 49).

Faculty have always been at the heart of higher education. "There is no doubt that teaching occupies a hallowed spot in community colleges" (Outcalt, 2000, p. 1). As Huber (1998) explains, not only does the size and diversity of their sector make faculty stand out among professionals, but it is the teaching role, far more than the research and service aspect, that is a the heart of their profession. And that role is also crucial to their identity formation (DeBard, 1972, as cited in Outcalt).

The sanctity of academic freedom has always been considered an inalienable right of faculty. But in today's society, with its rapid change and increasing demands on higher education to catch up with the 21st century, colleges are implementing various change initiatives, including directives for new approaches to teaching. These changes are being imposed on faculty, reducing their once-admired collegial status to that of an employee, left to deal with the consequences of decisions they had no part in making but that affect them tremendously. Faculty favor a high level of autonomy in their academic work (Turk, 2000) and expect college administrators to respect academic freedom; moreover, faculty perception of teaching is not necessarily to "serve the customer and to maximize profits" (p. 29).

Higher education, and the community college in particular, is in a precarious position. It is facing increased demands for accountability, rising costs and limited resources, and the fluctuating requirements of a rapidly changing technology (Dickinson, 1999; Baker, 1999; McClenney, 1998). The students it was designed to serve are now part of a wider and more diverse, and demanding, community. They

come from different ethnic backgrounds, abilities, experiences, and ages. As well, students today are becoming more consumer oriented, expecting to be treated more like customers (Turk, 2000; James, 1999; McClenney, 1998; Mitchell, 1998; McGrath & Spear, 1991). Their motivation for pursuing higher education is not so much for "love of learning" as it is for a credential (Larabee, as cited in Mitchell, 1998), necessitated by current market demands.

Governments and colleges are responding by rushing to implement education initiatives that appear to meet societal demands and customer (student) expectations. But because of this market-driven response, faculty often interpret innovations as short sighted—meant to introduce quick change for popular approval and retention of political power. Although faculty may be consulted regarding proposed innovations, their input is not always taken into consideration. Many have found "their work consigned to a forgotten shelf…their efforts [having] served principally to bolster an administrator's credentials for a career step to another institution" (Pew Foundation, 1997, p. 2). Cynical reactions are not unusual, then, among faculty who hold ideals about the intellectual focus and direction of an education. According to Cain, as cited in Harbour (2000, p. 2), "for academic faculty, the story of the community college has been the slow drift from mission to disillusionment, from boutique to Wal-Mart; a position that has moved them from a position of power to a lack of perceived power . . . [and] a loss of intellectual rigor." Faculty, who have always upheld quality as an ideal, are obviously concerned. With the movement toward running educational institutions as a business, they are losing what little influence they have had in managing the changes that confront them.

Personal Interest

My interest in this topic began when, as a community college faculty member, I took on the duties of a change facilitator. My task was to coordinate the implementation of various initiatives concerning course design and assessment strategies. These initiatives were not as simple and straightforward to implement as originally thought: They affected every level of the institution and even the entire post-secondary system. Not only did faculty need to learn and put into practice these innovations, but counselors and advisors needed to understand them, students needed

to know what was now possible, registrars had to design application and payment procedures, the senate had to adopt new policies, and the college had to work out new articulation agreements with other institutions. Just one simple initiative put into turmoil a set of established practices and provoked serious debate around deeper issues of education, articulation, and residency requirements. While administrators had assumed that faculty resistance would be the greatest challenge to overcome, I found in my experience that most faculty didn't resist if they understood and saw the benefit of the new practice. The benefits were not always evident, however, and the system was often slow to provide the necessary explanation. Nearly five years later, I still hear of faculty resistance as the reason for any difficulties associated with the initiative.

I saw this research project as an opportunity to study how faculty members view educational change within the community college. I felt, as a faculty member myself, that their voices needed to be heard.

Focus of the Study

In our rush to reform education, we have forgotten a simple truth: reform will never be achieved by renewing appropriations, restructuring schools, rewriting curricula, and revising texts if we continue to demean and dishearten the human resource called the teacher on whom so much depends (Palmer, 1998, p. 3).

The focus of this research study is on educational change as experienced by community college faculty. The call for transformation to the community college is no doubt made with good intentions, but decisions are being made by those in power—government officials and community college administrators—not those who are left to carry it out. Because "we assume that others experience the world the same way we do" (Holstein & Gubrium, 1994, p. 262), those who are mandating and implementing change efforts assume that the change is experienced and understood by faculty in the same way as they perceive it. But the only way to know is to ask. In this study, I asked faculty members; I did not focus on administrators, students, or staff.

Because the study is concerned with human experience, the methodology is phenomenological, using collaborative interviews and discussions as the method of data collection. The interviews with faculty were, as Van Manen (1990) describes

them, more of a "conversational relationships with a partner . . . and with a phenomenon" (p.66) than they were of a formal question-and-answer forum. Lather (1991) refers to this conversational format as *dialogic, interactive interviews.* This approach was important to me, because as faculty members—even though from a different college—the participants were my colleagues. According to Fontana and Frey (1994), "In typical interviews there exists a hierarchical relation, with the respondent being in the subordinate position. . . . Interviewers are not to give their own opinions and are to evade direct questions" (p. 369). But, as they note, this view is shifting to allow the development of a "closer relation between interviewer and respondent, minimizing status differences." Citing Rheinharz (1992), they continue by explaining, that methodologically, "this approach provides a greater spectrum of responses and a greater insight" (p. 370). An additional note is that I was not there "to change views, but to hear what the other is saying. . . to learn from the subjects' views and understand why they are the way they are" (Bogdan & Biklen, p. 101).

As explained by Gall, Gall, and Borg (1999), "through interviews and discussions, the researchers begin conversing intensively with the field participant (that is, engaging in dialogue, the outcomes of which are data to be analyzed)" (p. 369). They also note that "dialogical data generation allows the people under study some control over the research process, yielding a more democratic form of knowledge production."

Study Characteristics

My intent in carrying out this study was to focus on an area with which I am familiar in order to deepen my understanding and share it with others. As noted earlier, I am a faculty member in a community college with a teaching background in the Liberal Arts, specialized in languages and communication. I therefore sought out a similar culture and context for the research. The community college I chose as field site is similar to the one where I teach, and it has a number of faculty who teach in the Liberal Arts (which I defined to include subject areas in the departments of Literature, Humanities, and the Social Sciences).

The research study included three phases of data collection and analysis. First I looked at the context of the field site and of the faculty participants. Second, I interviewed 16 faculty members from all areas of the Liberal Arts. And third, I

engaged in a group dialogue session with six of the original faculty participants. This group dialogue was an attempt to come to an understanding on a collective level. Faculty, as individuals, bring not only their personal experience, but they share a common experience that is worth exploring too. The overriding purpose of this study is to give faculty voices a place to be heard and validated—to understand change from the perspective of faculty, as individuals and as a group.

Phenomenological Approach

The research approach I used was phenomenology. As defined by Van Manen (1996), phenomenology is a qualitative approach concerned with "making explicit lived experience." The purpose "is to try to grasp the essential meaning of something" (p. 77). Through theme analysis, I attempted to capture and interpret the deeper meaning of faculty experiences. And in the writing, my "own perceptions become part of the data" (Patton, 1990, p.58). Van Manen (1996) explains that "writing is the method": It "makes external what is internal" (p. 126). When we write about experiences, he says, the writing "teaches us what we know," helping us to "concretize our understanding" (p. 128). Writing makes the invisible visible.

According to qualitative researchers (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 24; Holstein & Gubrium, 1994, p. 262), reality is socially constructed. Lather (1991) goes further in saying there is "a shift away form the concept of a *found* world, 'out there,' objective, knowable, and factual, toward a concept of *constructed* worlds" (p. 86). Reason (1994) believes that there is an "emerging worldview, more holistic, pluralistic, and egalitarian, that is essentially participative . . . and fueled by holistic and systemic thinking." It is a worldview that "sees human beings cocreating their reality through their experience" (p. 324). In other words, phenomenological research aims to find the reality of the participants from understanding their perspective (Bogdan & Biklen, p. 24).

The postmodern age is built on a new set of assumptions about the nature of reality—that there is no fixed and knowable reality (Rifkin, 2000; Lather, 1991). Rather, there are multiple realities, and they are all valid. "Absolute knowledge was never possible, anyway. We just thought otherwise, believing in gods and kings and . . . the 'objectivity' of scientists" (Lather, 1991, p. 117). Reality is a perception. Frye (1983) provides this etymological explanation of the word *reality*:

> Reality is that which is. The English word *real* stems from a word which meant *regal*, "of or pertaining to the king." *Real* in Spanish means *royal*. Real property is that which is proper to the king. Real estate is the estate of the king. Reality is that which pertains to the one in power, is that over which he has power, is his domain, his estate, is proper to him. The ideal king reigns over everything as far as the eye can see. His eye. What he cannot see is not royal, not real. He sees what is proper to him. To be real is to be visible to the king (p. 155).

Faculty Perspective

This research study is concerned with what is real to faculty regarding change. Faculty have been referred to as the "honored but invisible" components of the community college (Grubb, 1999). My intent is to make their reality visible. Research has been undertaken to describe faculty culture and to understand faculty perceptions of their roles in the community college (Corbin, 1998; Kiefer, 1997; Toman, 1995). Studies have also been made to determine faculty perceptions of their participation in decision-making in higher education (Thaxter & Graham, 1999; Steinberg, 1999). Action research has followed faculty members through personal and professional development that has ultimately effected organizational change in an institution (McKenna, 1998). But no study has been made to document faculty perceptions of the changes that are occurring to them and to the community college. This research provides a forum for faculty thoughts, feelings, values, and perceptions in the context of educational change.

As identified by The Pew Foundation (1997), the challenge is to create agreement between administration and faculty that recognizes the demands of the market while affirming the values that define higher education. The first step is to better understand what those values are from the viewpoint of those involved. As a result of this study, I have come to a better appreciation of the effect of change on faculty, education, and community colleges. Ultimately, I hope that an understanding of faculty concerns and ideas around the topic of educational change will contribute to a better understanding of the community college in the 21st century.

Organization of This Dissertation

This chapter has introduced the need for an understanding of faculty perceptions of the change that education is undergoing in the 21st century. Chapter 2 provides a review of literature and current research in order to situate educational change in the context of society; analyze current thinking on organizational change strategies; define the role of the community college in the 21st century, and identify faculty culture and concerns—more specifically of those in the Liberal Arts. After establishing a foundation for the research questions, Chapter 3 explains the choice of methodology and describes the design and execution of the research study. In Chapter 4, I provide a contextual description of the field site, particularly of the community college and of the faculty participants. The findings from the interviews and group dialogue session are presented and analyzed in Chapters 5 and 6. A more in-depth discussion of these findings follows in Chapter 7, as well as reflections on the research study itself, with insights and understandings, and some concluding thoughts.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Throughout history there has been a succession of worldviews; that is, general notions of cosmic order, and of the nature of reality as a whole. Each of these views has expressed the essential spirit of its time, and each of them has had profound effects on the individual, and on society as a whole, not only physically, but also psychologically and ethically (Bohm, 1987, p. 1).

This study focuses on the concept of change as seen through the eyes of community college faculty. The way that they, or anyone, see change is grounded in the political, economic, social, and educational theories of our time. Thus to understand change, we must look to the context in which it is occurring and into the worldviews of those who are perceiving it. This chapter is organized to review organizational and educational aspects of change and to situate them in global and local contexts. The chapter begins with an overview of change according to systems theory, then reviews leadership and organizational change theories, portrays the challenges of the community college of the 21st century, and finally examines the culture and role of faculty. It also analyzes relevant research on faculty perceptions that provided a comparative basis for the design and consequent interpretations and understandings developed in this study.

The Place of Change in Systems Theory

Systems theory—also commonly known as the new science—is the scientific belief of the 21st century that everything is connected. This thinking represents a profound change in perception of the nature of the universe, replacing the mechanistic reductionism of Newtonian science with a holistic version of a self-regulating, self-organizing, complex network of interdependent parts; and this approach is the backdrop of our postmodern society. According to Isaacs (1999), "there has been an explosion of systems thinking in every arena of human activity" (p. 236).

Ultimately, systems theory defines living nature as mindful and intelligent. In application, every organization or gathering of human beings constitutes a living system. Thus, learning organizations (such as institutions of higher education) are conscious entities possessing the properties of living systems. A living system is constantly changing—its characteristic is to continuously renew itself and to regulate the renewal process in such a way that the integrity of the structure is maintained. A change in a small place can create large system change because it shares in the unbroken wholeness that unites the system (Capra, 1996; Bohm, 1985). Where Newtonian science divides things up and takes apart components to analyze and understand them, systems theory attempts to understand parts in context and in relation to the other parts and to the whole. This is because the whole is greater than the sum of the parts: The whole contains properties that none of the parts has independently.

Change is the transition from one state or condition to another. It can occur gradually over a period of time, or come about abruptly and unexpectedly. According to systems theory, change is a naturally occurring condition. Wheatley (1992) explains that "equilibrium is neither the goal nor the fate of living systems. . . . Disequilibrium is the necessary condition for a system's growth" (p.78). No part of a larger system is left unaffected by changes that occur someplace within it (p. 97). And as Isaacs (1999) clarifies, "We cannot simply *make* change happen as if we were separate from the thing we seek to change" (p.145). To imagine that one can simply implement and manage change is a "technocratic approach" that "assumes that the world is simple and easily controlled, that it changes only in predictable ways, and that it can be mastered" (Postrel, 1998, p. 86).

Wheatley adds, "Changes do not occur randomly, in any direction. They are always consistent with what has gone on before, with the history and identity of the system" (p. 94). The pace of change is irregular, with spurts of learning, or change, separated by longer periods of apparent stability (Imel, 2000). Many theoretical frameworks have been developed to classify and understand change in its different aspects and stages.

The physicist, Gregory Bateson, as cited in Zorn, Christensoen, and Cheney (1999, p. 10), classifies change as occurring on two different levels:

1. ***First-order change***: Minor, incremental change, which can even be attempts made in order not to change.
2. ***Second-order change:*** Major change involving system adjustments that is difficult to monitor and to anticipate, even if resulting from first-order change. The system becomes something fundamentally different than it was.

This bifold classification of change provides a clear, practical way of distinguishing between minor and major changes. In current application, we might classify education initiatives such as learning outcomes—the expression of curriculum goals from a learning-centered perspective—as a first-order change. The effect on the entire system appears to have been minimal. We might, however, look at the introduction of advanced technology and online courses as second-order change, with its ripple effect on faculty and student skill requirements, structural and technical support demands, and resulting administrative complexities. The changes that both these examples bring about, however, may be even further reaching in the long term.

Another way of classifying change is a further refinement into four distinctive categories (Imel, 2000; Hohn, 1998):

1. ***Change by exception***: An exception made to an existing belief system, for isolated events.
2. ***Incremental change:*** Gradual movement, so that one is not aware of it.
3. ***Pendulum change***: Extreme exchanges of points of view.
4. ***Paradigm change:*** Fundamental rethinking of premises and assumptions, touching on beliefs and values about how the world works.

These categories serve to describe and explain subtle differences in change as it is implemented and as it is perceived. We are typically experiencing all four in our day-to day involvement in education; much of it is more easily defined by hindsight. Certainly the most obvious and talked-about change that was promoted during the 1990s was

the "great paradigm shift." Barr and Tagg's article in *Change* (1995), "From Teaching to Learning: A New Paradigm for Undergraduate Education," was hailed as a breakthrough approach, embraced by government legislators and institutional administrations, and widely circulated around community college campuses—at least among administrators. It even launched an annual conference in San Diego, California: The Learning Paradigm. At the same time, organizational consultants in community colleges were writing about the need to bring about a transformation in the community college, and were explaining how to make it happen. O'Banion (1995) declared that "at the moment, most community colleges are struggling to operate within established paradigms that are dying" (p. 19).

Among the experts, Carter and Alfred have prepared a series of monographs for the Consortium for Community College Development as an aid to bring about the prescribed transformation. They underline the need to implement change, organizing change events into these forms (1997):

- ***Operational change:*** Focuses on improvements to current practice as opposed to more radical approaches that go beyond tinkering.
- ***Framebreaking change:*** Departures from past or current practice; often related to high-profile achievements that take the college "out of the box."
- ***Stretch:*** Strategies that help an organization reach for the future while maintaining equilibrium and preserving the past; it is incremental and catalytic.

Operational change is seen as involving systematic initiatives that, over time, achieve results. Framebreaking change might include outsourcing or partnering with a technology consortium to provide distance learning programs. Stretch strategies would include reorganizing a department to provide completely new programs that better meet students' needs. The premise is that change is necessary and must be brought about skillfully. Whether planned or unplanned, however, change can be seen to generally proceed through five stages, as identified by Duck (2001):

1. ***Stagnation:*** The system has reached a static point; something isn't working anymore in relation to the other components of the system.

2. ***Preparation:*** The system readies itself for alteration or transformation; or perhaps someone in the institution instigates a new procedure or plan.
3. ***Implementation:*** The change begins to take effect. This may be abrupt or gradual.
4. ***Determination:*** Resistance to the change is resisted and the process continues its path.
5. ***Fruition:*** The process is completed, the change has occurred, and a new static condition sets in.

Duck explains that the process of change, from the human viewpoint, is a difficult process for most people to live through. It is said that we are currently experiencing more rapid change than at any other period in time. Change creates upheaval, stress, and anxiety (fear of the future) whether it is welcomed or not, because it requires a questioning of assumptions and rethinking of beliefs and actions. Change is a process that involves learning, and learning brings about change.

Situating Change in Our Society

The change that we are experiencing is occurring at a global level and affecting every part of human society, explains Rifkin in his latest book, *The Age of Access* (2001). He claims that the advent of the personal computer is as transformational to human consciousness and societal evolution as was the invention of the printing press. At the same time, capitalism is transforming and spreading globally, affecting the nature of business and, ultimately, society (Rifkin, 2001; Handy, 1998). The focus, Rifkin says, is no longer on accumulating products, but on buying *access* to products and their related intangible commodities. Anything and everything—including education—becomes a deliverable commodity. The implications of this premise are enormous: It means we will see a drastically altered society, which will, in turn, require a radically different approach to education.

The new generation, he projects, is one that interprets the world in a different way. As proof, he explains that today's youth appear to be more comfortable reading information on a screen than in a book; living in seven-second sound bites and thinking in terms of images more than words; less analytical and more emotive; less

interested in history, but obsessed with style and fashion; more systemic and participatory than linear and objective; less competitive and more oriented to consensus thinking and teambuilding; flexible and able to adjust to changing environments; and more caught up in time than in geographical space. In sum, they tend to live for the moment, and for self. Moreover, they are comfortable using technology for creating and maintaining social and business relations.

Because networking, teamwork, and relationship building will be the vital keys to the new economy, social dynamics will also change. The average individual will meet thousands of people in a lifetime, but these relationships will be of a different nature, focusing on access to computers and communication technology. The result of these new dynamics is a generation that is more connected to disembodied relationships, unable to feel empathy for one another, and incapable of creating the social trust that is so essential to maintaining culture (Rifkin, 2001; Handy, 1998).

Previously, strong community was the prerequisite for a healthy economy because it produced culture and culture built social trust. But intimate social relations require real time contact and face-to-face engagement. Today, human affairs are structured quite differently and commercial bonds, not social bonds, are those left to hold society together. The implications of these claims are that education must prepare youth and adults for such a future, keeping the following concepts in mind:

- ***Temporality of Employment:*** Learners need to find a niche in an area of interest and constantly upgrade their skills and knowledge, adapting themselves to provide a variety of services in their specialization.
- ***Lifelong Learning:*** Students will need continual enhancement of skills, personal and professional development, and counseling.
- ***Post-Modern Institutions:*** Colleges will serve as intermediary agents to provide a range of personalized services that ensure lifelong learning opportunities. Institutions and learners will see each other in terms of lifetime value, commonly referred to as LTV.
- ***Societal Agents:*** Learning institutions will need to provide a continuum of services that meet personal, workplace, social, and civic needs. One of these

> needs will be to develop empathy and understanding of diverse lifestyles and cultures and of how cultural values hold societies together.

Rifkin's points are somewhat sensationalistic, but they do reflect the media's representation of world affairs, and the media are the mainstay of public information. As Cohen and Brawer (1996) warn, "Public attitude, always mercurial, influences the colleges" (p. 419). Forecasting is making an impression on government legislators and college administrators, who are introducing change initiatives and reorganizing and restructuring in response to the predictions they choose to accept. The demands of preparing students to serve and thrive in the new economy will fall largely on the shoulders of community colleges, which account for approximately 50% of the post-secondary population today, a percentage that has every indication of increasing (Corbin, 1998; Cohen and Brawer, 1996; Toman, 1995).

Leadership & Organizational Change

When an organization is facing the need to implement change, it typically turns to the advice of organizational consultants. Over the last decade, an increasing amount of text has been produced with just such advice. If we assume that the change occurring in our society will need to be addressed in education as well as in business, as Rifkin (2000) implies, then maybe the business experts have relevant advice on implementing and managing it.

The Change Gurus

The *Harvard Business Review on Change* (1998) is a collection of articles written during the 1990s by the top business writers offering an overview of current theories on managing corporate change. The premise is that change programs, embraced by organizations in the past, have failed to bring about desired results. These authors each offer advice on a better way to go about implementing change.

Collins and Porras (1996), in "Building Your Company's Vision," declare that the best way to balance continuity and change is to adopt a vision framework that provides a core purpose and core values that will endure, through bold stretch goals,

expressed as Big Hairy Audacious Goals (BHAGs), along with vivid descriptions of what it will mean to achieve them. To be effective, they say, and to truly motivate, a vision statement must be dynamic and inspiring; only then can progress be stimulated.

In "Managing Change: The Art of Balancing" (1993), Duck explains that managers need to think of themselves as overseeing a dynamic system, rather than managing change bit by bit, in small pieces, as does Total Quality Management (TQM), process reengineering, and employee empowerment. Managers must connect and balance all pieces of the change effort like balancing a mobile, for a change in one area throws another area off balance. She believes in providing a Transition Management Team to guide the organization through major change by establishing relationships and communication at all levels. Ignoring the emotional connections, she says, alienates people and devalues those kept out of the process.

Goss, Pascale, and Athos (1993), in "The Reinvention Roller Coaster: Risking the Present for a Powerful Future," suggest that when managers seek a more fundamental shift in their organization's capabilities, they need to do more than improve, they need to reinvent. Popular change programs, such as cross-functional teams, defect reduction, and business redesign processes, often succeed in the short range by lowering costs and improving performance, but they treat the symptoms, not the underlying conditions. Reinvention, they explain, is about creating a new context to improve competitiveness.

Martin (1993), in "Changing the Mind of the Corporation," warns that leaders should expect to adjust the institution's strategies and practices at least every decade, or sooner, as the institution grows and changes. This is because, he says, organizations tend to resist new truths in a mechanical way and soon end up in a crisis by doing the very things that once made them big. The solution for companies is to burn themselves down every few years and rebuild their strategies, roles, and practices.

Strebel (1996), in "Why Do Employees Resist Change?," says past failures in change efforts are because executives and employees see change differently. For senior managers, change means opportunity—both for the business and for themselves. But for many employees, change is seen as disruptive and intrusive. Therefore, the recommendation is to create personal compacts with staff within each department and interdepartmentally to align staff and institution visions and goals.

Augustine (1997), in "Reshaping an Industry: Lockheed Martin's Survival Story," feels that companies in technology-driven industries must reinvent themselves continually. That means "reading the tea leaves"— being ready to make tough decisions and then going through with them. In other words, when the first signs come along that change is necessary, don't ignore them.

Schaffer and Thomson (1992) in "Successful Change Programs Begin with Results" suggest management should focus on results-driven programs that focus on achieving specific, measurable improvements within a short time. Typically, innovations have focused on activity-centered programs, which rely on broad-based policies concerned with time-consuming preparations and get nowhere because there is no explicit connection between action and outcome.

Kotter (1995), in "Leading Change: Why Transformation Efforts Fail," reminds us that bringing about transformative change requires time, and must not be rushed. He draws lessons from the failures of various methods—TQM, reengineering, right sizing, restructuring, cultural change, and turnarounds—to inform organizations of common mistakes and how to avoid them. This article was later developed into the book, *Leading Change* (1997), which is considered by many as a reliable and useful aid to bringing about corporate transformation.

Kotter's book outlines eight steps, which he explains have to be followed step by step, in full depth with none skipped over, in order to sustain, nurture, and enhance an understanding of the change. These steps comprise (1) Establishing a sense of urgency; (2) Creating the guiding collation; (3) Developing a vision and strategy; (4) Communicating the change vision; (5) Empowering broad-based action; (6) Generating short-term wins; (7) Consolidating gains and producing more change; and (8) Anchoring new approaches in the culture. It is interesting to note that because Kotter feels only a state of urgency will provide the reason for people to want change, he is not above creating a crisis to get them moving—all for the greater cause of bringing about change.

Evidently, change gurus have pretty much taken the position that transformation—second-order change— is necessary in order to survive and succeed in the 21st century. Their advice assumes a top-down authoritarian model of implementing change; of imposing change on employees and finding ways of making

them accept it. Their advice is taken to heart all over America—they are, after all, the experts. Most advise constant communication with employees: Strebel even advises aligning staff and institutional goals (which are ultimately, management's). But only Duck emphasizes the human element, the need to address the emotions which are inevitably going to arise when change happens, and acknowledges the effect on the organization as a system. (She is, perhaps coincidently, the only woman author in this collection.) They all argue that change is something to be implemented and managed.

The logical extension of their thinking is that because education is an integral part of the new global culture, it should also transform; and because post-secondary institutions are becoming competitive and more financially conscious, they should be run more like a business. In other words, the institution should consider its learners as customers, and its services as productivity. Faculty and staff are employees; senior administrators are the expert leaders with the vision. The follow-through is to implement change in the community college as in a corporation.

This business point of view is expounded by Oblinger and Verville (1998). In their book, *What Business Wants from Higher Education*, they bring to attention that higher education is of critical importance to business, providing society with educated employees, consumers, and citizens. When business changes (as it does constantly), education must shift as well, so that graduates are prepared to enter the workplace ready for work and able to adapt to the future. "Quality of education will be the competitive differentiator of businesses and nations," they profess (p. 27), and it must enhance its efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability, by adopting best practices, especially in business operations. They further explain: "The operative definition of *quality* in business and industry is 'fitness for use.' . . . Transposing this definition on higher education, quality in our educational system means that when students graduate, they will be prepared for the world of work and a balanced life" (p. 125).

From business's point of view, "university administrators and faculty members do not understand the requirements of the private sector and the need for students to be better prepared for the demands of a changing global economy" (p. x), but the experts seem to take for granted that business understands the requirements of higher education. Their obvious conclusion is that higher education must create and sustain a professional faculty workforce that is "flexible and highly productive," which means

fewer full and tenured professors. Not to worry, though, "faculty will resist change, but market forces will have a stronger say" (p. 156).

The Cynics

Business has a long list of recommendations and requirements, the least of which require a full-scale transformation of post-secondary institutions, and even of education itself. Zorn, Christensoen, and Cheney (1999) take a cynical view of this compulsion to change—reengineer, downsize, restructure—as recommended by current leadership gurus. In their monograph, *Do We Really Want Constant Change?*, they state that it is impossible for an organization or society to sustain constant change, because it constantly throws organizations into a state of chaos, overlooks the human need for stability, and ignores how important stability and predictability are for organizational efficiency. The authors note that "until the 1980s, leadership was considered to be good management—providing direction and support to influence people to strive for effective goal accomplishment" (p. 20). Since that time, it has been "reconceptualized to mean creating change, all the time. And as result, a leader's reputation is based on creating change, or a least appearing to do so" (p. 22).

Their observation is that our culture worships change, such that "*change* and *flexibility* have become 'god terms,' accepted unquestionably as good terms, with no reflection as To What? or For What?" Largely responsible for this state of affairs is our media, especially TV sitcoms, which create a false impression of the way most of life's problems are solved. "They reflect our need for instant gratification, our impatience with the present, and our desire for change. Long-term solutions requiring patience and endurance are devalued in our media-saturated and novelty-hungry world" (p.7). The response to change is often more change, rather than stability and rest. But change usually focuses almost exclusively on productivity and not on people.

Introducing constant change is disruptive in any environment, continue Zorn, Christensoen, and Cheney. The common theme to most change programs, the authors note, is that people lose jobs (p. 32); employees react by being overwhelmed, stressed, and burned out (p. 31); and people talk about change as something over which they have no control (p. 17). The more an organization strives for continuous change, the more difficult it can be for members to feel a sense of stability, especially when the

changes do not flow logically or organically from established missions and strategic plans (p. 13). Constant change results in a weak social contract between individuals and organizations (p. 30), with widespread feelings of insecurity about the future. With no long term, there is no basis for trust, loyalty, or mutual commitment, which have long been the foundation of a successful organization.

With these apparent issues, the authors caution that being responsive to external and internal demands for change is appropriate up to a point, but that an educational leader must be sensible and self-reflective about the various fads and fashions that come along. Indeed, Birnbaum (2000) makes this abundantly clear in *Management Fads in Higher Education*. Citing Sussman (1994), he says that versions of "Throw history into the dustbin and start anew" have been attributed to every failed radical movement of the last 200 years. In his words, "Adherence to their central traditions has made universities among the oldest and most successful institutions in Western civilization" (p. 220). He further adds that in higher education, "constancy is not weakness, but strength (p. 152). Citing Leslie and Fretwell (1996), he continues, saying that the most successful institutions are not those with the most money, but those that remain the most resilient because their faculty, staff, students, and friends are committed to them.

Birnbaum is annoyed by the arrogance of the business experts, who refer to the business's presumed efficiency, ignoring its penchant for "short-term expediency and golden parachutes" (p. xiii). The problem is that business focuses on the bottom line, while colleges and universities are criticized for appearing to be insensitive to economic realities. Fads, he explains, perpetuate the narrative that business and industry are highly efficient and effective, while higher education is not.

He comments, with irony, that the establishment of community colleges (at the turn of the century) was the first academic management revolution, emphasizing means rather than ends to make higher education more efficient and accountable—more businesslike. Sixty years later (1960s to 2000), the second academic management revolution followed, emphasizing ends rather than means, to produce at lowest cost goods desired by customers—making higher education more like a business. The difference is that the idea of higher education as a social institution is displaced by the view of higher education as an industry.

COMMUNITY COLLEGES IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Community colleges are currently in a position of trying to be all things to all people, attempting to respond to business, government, and social needs. "Two-year institutions are at the center of change in higher education. They are the linking organization that helps people of all ages connect to our common lifeplaces in work, family, and the community" (Copa & Ammentorp, 1998).

THE PAST

Community colleges first appeared at the height of the industrial revolution, in the early years of the 20th century (Cohen & Brawer, 1996). Several factors contributed to their establishment—the need for industrial workers who had technical skills; the drive for social equality, translated as access to higher education; and the lengthened period of adolescence, resulting from child-labor laws. Modernism was the driving force behind education, and the community colleges were seen to provide a means for a greater number of citizens to gain upward mobility and a meaningful livelihood in modern times, providing a lower cost alternative to private colleges.

Organizationally, the colleges grew out of the high schools. Until the 1940s, these institutions were most commonly known as *junior colleges*, but by the 1950s, the term junior college was applied more often to junior branches of private universities and to two-year colleges supported by churches, while *community colleges* became the term preferred for publicly supported institutions (Cohen & Brawer, 1996, p. 4). By the 1970s, community colleges had become widely known as comprehensive two-year colleges that were accredited to award the Associate in Arts or the Associate in Science as its highest degree, and also offered technical, professional, vocational, and remedial programs (p. 5). As part of their social mandate, community colleges embraced open access policies—that is, admission was not, and still is not, dependent on high grade-point average out of high school.

Although the community college had a broad mandate at its inception, by far the largest portion of its offerings was in academic courses. "Skill training alone was not considered sufficient to qualify an institution for the appellation of college" (p. 4). In the earliest community colleges, most of the offerings were transfer courses in the

Liberal Arts (mainly humanities). With the Liberal Arts came the collegial function of education, codified through years of tradition. The humanities were key to the acculturation of the young and the molding of students to the ideals of society, and provided the academic foundation for "contemplative scholars advancing the frontiers of knowledge" (p. 308). The elite status of the Liberal Arts and the transfer emphasis continued well into the 1960s, even as professional and technical programs increased and comprised a much larger proportion of institutional offerings. Community colleges were, and still are, "evaluated to a major degree upon the success of their transfer students to the four-year colleges and universities" (Cosand, cited in Cohen & Brawer, 1996).

The Present

Over the last century, community colleges have expanded and responded to meet community needs, especially by increasing access. This expansion has resulted in a growth in enrollment of women, minorities, older students and workers, and low achievers in high school (Cohen & Brawer, 1996, p. 25). While universities consider research their primary responsibility and teaching secondary, community colleges place their emphasis on teaching, with the student at the center (Corbin, 1998; Cohen & Brawer, 1996; Toman, 1995).

Community colleges throughout North America are focusing on an emerging, or continued, emphasis on the learning needs of students with the ultimate goal of preparing them for a working career and citizenship in the global community. Governments and institutions have made public commitments to push colleges into meeting business and societal demands, including the shift from a teaching to a learning paradigm— largely by promoting such education initiatives as learning outcomes, cooperative learning, prior learning assessment, employability skills, and distributed education services (e.g., Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, 2000; State Board of Community and Technical Colleges, 1999; British Columbia Senior Educational Officers Committee & Senior Instructional Officers Committee, 1999; Council of Ministers Education Canada, 1999; California Citizens Commission on Higher Education, 1998; Province of British Columbia, 1996).

However, these education initiatives, while meeting the goal of appearing innovative and responsive have largely resulted in first-order change; the basic structure of the community college has remained. Issues of globalization and commodification, as identified by Rifkin, are likely to have further-reaching demands and effects. And the relevance of the Liberal Arts is constantly being questioned.

We are beginning to see that, whether mandated or not, initiatives of a second-order nature may soon be in the cards. According to several experts in community college organizational thinking (Baker, 1999; McClenney, 1999; Walker, 2001), major trends are influencing and changing the delivery of education:

- ***Internationalization of the Marketplace***: The globally competitive economy has created a variety of education providers—charter schools and colleges, e-schools, broker and proprietary schools, and private non-profit institutions—that can enroll students from anywhere in the world. The concept of community has enlarged.
- ***Learner Diversity***: Students are becoming much more diverse and consumer oriented. The majority of students in higher education are older, attend part-time, are employed, and come from a variety of social and cultural backgrounds. They have families, jobs, mortgages, and other demands on their time and they want convenience, good treatment, and 24-hour availability of instruction and services.
- ***Employer Needs***: Certification is required for even entry-level jobs. Students must acquire an increasing volume of knowledge and skills and develop the ability to think critically and solve complex problems.
- ***Technology***: Widespread use of computers and communication technologies affect how, where, and from whom students are learning. They offer new areas of inquiry and expertise, offer new methods of learning and instruction, and create new ways to access knowledge and manipulate information.
- ***Distributed Education***: On-line learning is easily available and in demand, offering more opportunities and increased demands on resource funds and support. The growth in distance education and the changes in funding sources erase the economic sense of in-state and out-of-state tuition differences.

- ***Performance Funding:*** The emphasis is on productivity, customer satisfaction, and return on investment (ROI). Students are now the measure for performances. Remedial education is seen as a reward for persistent poor performers. (Politicians and investors don't like to pay for anything twice.)

These forces seem to be indicating an increased atmosphere of competition. In the words of Carter and Alfred (1998), "A new educational infrastructure is needed to thrive in a market with competitors pushing new boundaries and students wanting more and better service. This door means new organizational models, new ways of doing business, and new approaches to measuring performance" (p. 8). Dolence and Norris (1995) call for "realignment to the needs of the information age" (p. 3). Decidedly the educational change experts seem to agree with the business experts.

The Future

The future as predicted may already be here. Levin (2001) recently completed a comprehensive study of the influences of globalization and globalizing trends on seven community colleges in the Pacific Western region of the United States and Canada. In his report, *Globalizing the Community College: Strategies of Change in the 21st century*, he reveals that globalization has already taken place, noting that the most influential of the forces has been economic, since community colleges have historically been dependent on revenues from students, taxpayers, and government; and government's susceptibility to globalization has meant less protection from economic forces (p. 52). An important note is that the community college not only advances globalization, but also acts as a globalizing medium.

His results show that during the 1990s, the community college mission shifted—from serving a local economy to a global one—and as a result, the institution took on a more corporate and businesslike approach to education, becoming more competitive in its quest for funding. Influential in the shift was the use of new technologies for instruction and administrative tasks. The telltale signs of globalization include (p. 40):

- ***Internationalization:*** Immigration and recruitment of international students, administrators, and faculty; participation in international projects and meetings, and the delivery of college curriculum in other nations—on-site and through the internet.
- ***Multiculturalism:*** Recognition of diversity and promotion of equality among ethnic, class, age-related, and gender-oriented groups, with more attention and responsiveness to students' cultural needs; fewer practices of discrimination; and pluralism in hiring and governance.
- ***Commodification:*** Creation of services and products for the marketplace, which entails developing customized programs and delivering instruction or training to private business and industry.
- ***Homogenization:*** Adjustment of products and services for similarity among institutions; standardization of practices (such as educational delivery); and the attempt to objectify the curriculum for quantification and reduction to basic elements.
- ***Marketization:*** Competition with other institutions and organizations for revenues; formation of associations with private business and industry; and solicitation of donations of money, goods, and services.
- ***Restructuring:*** Structural alterations to change work patterns, products, and services, usually leading to job change, job loss, and the reallocation of resources (generally motivated by scarcity of resources).
- ***Labor alterations:*** Institutional changes to the nature and duration of work that modify workloads and work practices, including layoffs, more part-timers, and the hiring of lesser qualified staff for newly automated tasks.
- ***Productivity and efficiency:*** Doing "more with less" by raising productivity of existing workers and reducing the work force, often resulting in accountability strategies and increased managerial control over work.
- ***Electronic communication and information:*** Adoption of electronic technologies for work processes (such as registration and communication) and for education (such as online instruction).

- ***State intervention***: Increased role of the state in the affairs and operation of public institutions, including intervention, interference, and influence in college operations.

Levin has observed a noticeable "shift from innovation to survival" (p. 53), which brings with it a loss of social function and emphasis on a more significant economic function. As a result, there has been an emergence of a "new vocationalism" for the middle class, with a call for new-economy skills, employability skills, and applied skills (p.176). This is translated as "less emphasis on education, and more on training; less emphasis on community social needs, and more on the economic needs of business and industry; less upon individual development, and more upon work-force preparation and retraining" (p. 171).

The system itself has been affected by information technology, which has "actually reinforced managerial hierarchies and control" (p. 93). In addition, "technology increased faculty burden" (p. 96), not only in the preparation and delivery of on-line courses, but also through voice mail and e-mail: "workers are now [expected to be] available 24 hours a day" (p. 15). More administrative work was handed over to faculty, who took on roles as department chair, division chair, associate dean, and special initiative coordinators while retaining faculty status and pay scale. Administrators and faculty both noted a "massive increase in stress as a result of the volume of work, increased numbers of students, and fewer support staff" (p. 60).

Levin feels that this new vocationalism will shape the institution in the 21st century just as the access and vocational mission shaped the institution in the 20th century (p. 177). The pressures to provide education and training to a diverse student population, to serve community economic interests and to support institutional operations with adequate fiscal resources, he predicts, will only increase. Institutions will be caught between the need to turn more to the private sector for funds, especially fee payers, and to preserve the traditional mission of open access or increase the gap between the haves and the have nots. To keep to the socialization and educational missions of the community college, he says, community colleges should sustain or revitalize education that informs the mind and develops the person, even in the face of

global pressures—from business, industry and the state—to become globally competitive mechanisms for economic development (p. 181).

The question is no longer if education should become more like a business: it already has, and it is paying closer attention to business's demands. It would also seem that the Liberal Arts would still play an important role in educational offerings, but what form might they take? In the face of competition, decreased funding, and the call for accountability, the community college is facing an identity crisis. What is its purpose, and whom should it please? The concept and purpose of education itself appear to be in transformation. Are faculty, those who provide education aware of the changes that are taking place? And what is the role of faculty in the change that has arrived and that is yet to come?

Faculty's Place in Change

Faculty play a key role in education. Indeed, without faculty, there would be no community college. It is widely understood that community colleges are seen to be first and foremost teaching institutions; thus faculty, and their teaching responsibilities, play a central role (Grubb, 1999; Steinberg, 1999; Corbin, 1998; Cohen & Brawer, 1996; Toman, 1995).

"Community colleges face an increasingly complex environment that demands reconciling increased social obligations, rapid technological change, and public accountability with the reality of limited resources. At the intersection of these often conflicting demands lies the work of community college faculty" (Dickinson, 1999, p. 1). They are the ones who have to deliver. According to Evans (1996), many educational improvement schemes, rooted in the rational-structural paradigm of change, "concentrate on the . . . prescription of ideal cures . . .[and] pay little attention to the lived realities of the educators who must accomplish change or to the practical problems of institutional innovation" (p. 91).

In order to understand faculty's place in educational change, we need to first look at the established culture and role of faculty, and of those in the Liberal Arts in particular, since they are at the heart of this research study. Many myths abound among the public and administrators about what faculty do or should do: "Many feel

that faculty members lead idyllic lives of quiet contemplation in cluttered offices, reading and writing and occasionally lecturing to terrified students" (Carpenter, Paterson, Kibler, & Paterson., 1990, p. 207). Many recommendations on the need for change have been made by change consultants, based on these assumptions. "In making the transformation, higher education will need to realign with the changing nature of information, knowledge, and scholarship . . . Redefining roles in higher education will include faculty playing a variety of roles: researcher, synthesizer, mentor, evaluator and certifier of mastery, architect, and navigator (Dolence & Norris, 1995, p. 61). Rather than considering what changes faculty should be making, we will look at what faculty are doing now, and then at their perceptions of the change that is occurring.

Faculty Culture

"Every organization has a culture, which may change over time in response to varying situations of conditions' (Kapper, 1998). McKenna (1998) states in the preliminary to his doctoral research, "Organizational culture provides meaning and context for members of the culture. Culture holds people together and gives them a collective sense of purpose. Culture goes beyond the material to the more intangible, spiritual aspects for the organization" (p. 17). According to Bergquist (1992), culture, or a pattern of basic assumptions, helps to define the nature of reality for its members. Bergquist identifies four organizational cultures common to American higher education: collegial, managerial, developmental, and negotiating. The collegial culture, as he defines it, finds meaning primarily in the disciplines represented by the faculty of the institute. It values faculty research and scholarship, and sees its role as generating, interpreting, and disseminating knowledge. This culture is the most common in universities. The managerial culture finds meaning primarily in the organization, implementation, and evaluation of work that is directed toward specified goals and purposes, with particular value placed on fiscal and supervisory skills. This is the culture common to most Catholic colleges.

The developmental and negotiating cultures are newer adaptations in response to the multiplicity of roles and missions of educational institutions. While the developmental is personal-growth oriented, the negotiating is equity oriented.

Although all four cultures are present in community colleges, by far the most influential among faculty, Bergquist says, has been the collegial, especially in defining their roles, responsibilities, and realities of academic life (p. xiii). He has found faculty in public institutions to be even more committed to the collegial function of education than their colleagues at private colleges and universities. The managerial culture, he notes, represents the mindset of the administration of many community colleges. Citing Millet (1962), Bergquist explains that faculty members do not think of themselves as employees, and do not feel that their relation to a dean, vice president of academic affairs, or president involve supervisory authority (p. 46). Managerial cultures, on the other hand, are "governed by a hierarchical, clearly delineated line of authority" (p. 62). There would appear to be a conflict of culture, and of worldview, between the two groups.

Liberal Arts in the Collegial Culture

"Most of the faculty in community colleges," says Bergquist (1992), "received their own educations in a four-year college or university saturated with the collegial culture" (p. 90). Dickinson (1999) explains that the current role played by faculty was determined by changes that happened near the end of the 19th century and continue today as tradition. Approximately 100 years ago, higher education established disciplines and professional fields, of which the Liberal Arts held an important function in the education of a person. "Faculty members were expected to engage with their students in all aspects of life . . . the emphasis was on complexity of thought and the educational process. Faculty and students were judged on the basis of their manner of thought and discourse rather than on the basis of any specific body of knowledge" (Bergquist, 1992, p. 19). Another aspect of the revolution at this time is that "the recitation and disputation methods were replaced by the lecture teaching method" (Dickinson, 1999, p. 1), which were seen as the modern, scientific approach.

"Articulation agreements attest to the tenacity of the idea that the Liberal Arts are still important and that community colleges are a major port of entry to higher learning" (Cohen & Brawer, p. 322). However, throughout the 1970s, the demands for occupational education increased and the Liberal Arts had little defense in the calls for relevance and individualism rather than values and a common heritage. "The more

successful the colleges became in their mission of providing trained workers of the community, the more precarious became the idea of liberal education within them." All the same, by 1991, enrollment in the Liberal Arts classes had climbed back up to 56%, and the collegiate function proved resilient (pp. 323–324).

Faculty today have been taught through this 100-year-old collegial tradition stemming from the university model, and tend to teach in the same way (Cohen & Brawer, p. 324; Dickinson, p. 1) even if it doesn't fit with today's needs. "Instructors have acted as though contact between the students and themselves is the key element, as though all that is necessary for a person to learn is to engage in dialogue, and to read and reflect in a solitary fashion" (Cohen & Brawer, p. 325). But programs in the community college are changing: "The demise of the academic disciplines as the organizing principle of collegiate courses has both reflected and served to limit faculty members' awareness of recent trends in their academic fields" (p.327). Indeed, this is the stance taken by Barr and Tagg (1995), who feel that the lecture method is teacher-centered, while more learner-centered methods are required to meet the applied demands of the work in the knowledge age. Boggs (1999), a colleague of Barr and Tagg, believes that "educators have a tremendous amount of time and energy invested in the current paradigm, and may be resistant or blind to the need to change" (p.4). However, he sees the need to get on side with faculty, since "the efforts of faculty members will be essential in the transformation of colleges and universities to become more learning centered" (p.4). Huber (1998), on the other hand, found that "at many campuses, a climate of innovation in teaching is already well underway. Innovative practices included learning communities, collaborative learning and teaching, and self-directed leaning" (p. 199).

Evans (1996) describes the special characteristics of the faculty teaching at the millennium: Most of America's teachers began their careers in the late 1960s and 1970s, and almost "en masse, they have become a veteran, middle-aged, immobile group." Many of them are experiencing burnout, he says, due to rising demands and diminishing resources, and "they feel unappreciated, overworked, and demeaned as professionals" (p. 95). Their professional lives and values, he explains were shaped by the "magical and mythical qualities of that era, its promises of radical social transformation, its optimism, and its good intentions" (p. 110). Many faculty feel

they're "just not up for a whole new educational revolution" (p. 111). Not only, explains Evans, are they going through the changes of midlife, but they are more vulnerable to the stress and burnout caused by the gap between the demands made upon them and the resources available to them.

Dickinson, citing Scott (1992) and Altbach (1994), says that faculty are caught in the position of being "highly qualified professional performers" but also "members of a bureaucratic organizational structure in which they reside near the bottom of the hierarchy, [remaining] responsible for the work of the organization" (p. 8). Moreover, the move by administrators to consider education as a business only adds to the insult. Boggs (1999), an administrator himself, explains that the relationship between a teacher and a student is more complex than that between a business and a customer. "The teacher is the designer, the instructor, the guide, the advisor, the motivator, the taskmaster, and the evaluator." Students have to work for the outcomes for which they, or their parents, are paying. And teachers make extra efforts to help them succeed (p. 4). Education's aim has not traditionally been to make money *per se*, but to afford the opportunity for the successful learners to make money. Faculty having themselves been schooled in that train of thought, regard the aims of education in a similar way—certainly not as a money-making venture.

Research into Faculty Roles & Perceptions

Most research that has been done recently with community college faculty has focused on their teaching practices (Outcalt, 2000); with qualitative studies looking into faculty perceptions of these practices. One of the first of these studies was by Seidman (1985), who analyzed the dilemmas of community college teaching through interviews with 75 faculty members. He described a division between academic and occupational purposes, the perception of incredible pressures on faculty, the special difficulties of teaching under-prepared students, and the unimaginative use of computers. He stressed above all, the complexity of teaching well, along with the tendency of many colleges to ignore the valuable role of teaching and learning. These findings were generally attributed to faculty in all divisions.

Seidman's findings would appear to hold true 15 years later. Grubb and associates (1999) performed a study involving observations in 260 community college classrooms

and interviews with 257 instructors and 57 administrators. The purpose was to find out first what instructors do and what shapes their teaching before prescribing improvements, with the assumption that a community college is above all, a teaching institution as opposed to a research institution. According to Grubb, "there have been almost no empirical investigations of teaching in community colleges" (p. 9). He goes on to say that a great deal of literature has been written about how faculty ought to teach, with some even describing various methods, but no analysis of how frequent these practices are, how they are used, or whether they are even effective. In fact, many of the experts "make vague descriptions of instructional strategies without any sense of what instructors actually do" (p. 10). Grubb's findings also concluded that the majority of administrators are "distressingly ignorant about what happens in classrooms" (p. 15).

Grubb found that "the most basic fact of instructors' lives is that, if they are conscientious, they are overloaded" (p. 281). A second defining aspect of teachers' lives is isolation—"a legacy of the four-year college mode to guard against the infringement on academic freedom" (p. 283). The collegial culture has not encouraged collegiality: "The institutional conditions for supporting good teaching are missing in most colleges . . . . collegiality is lacking for full-time instructors as well as for part-time instructors. And the culture established by administrators who are ignorant about teaching applies equally to all" (p. 335).

According to Grubb, "when instructors contemplate the future, the prospects frighten them. Most foresee increasing numbers of students, with ever-greater educational and social needs, while budgets continue to stagnate" (p. 346). "The greatest fear among instructors is that the second-chance mission of the community college cannot be maintained if increased demands confront dwindling resources." The motivating factor among faculty of the 1960s and 1970s was the commitment to a broad array of students. But faculty are noting a change in culture. "Instructors become especially bitter when they see that they can't influence the conditions of their own teaching—when they see that they will have increasingly underprepared students without any help in teaching them" (p. 348).

Grubb suggested a need for instructional leaders who actively engage with faculty in discussions about teaching and even come to the classroom to really see what goes

on. He found that instructors desired professional development activities that were integrated into their professional lives rather than mere one-session affairs. Furthermore, they wanted activities that held at least an implicit focus on building and sustaining collegiality between themselves and their peers.

Toman (1995) focused her doctoral research on the roles and self-perceptions of community college faculty, explaining that little qualitative research had been done with the purpose of establishing and maintaining a setting to meet the needs of faculty to best serve students and the needs of the institution. Her study was ethnographic, involving 26 faculty members representing all disciplines in a two-year college. Originally, 36 faculty were invited to participate; they were chosen to represent all disciplines, both sexes, ethnic and minority faculty, and inexperienced as well as experienced. As triangulation for the study methodology, Toman also interviewed key administrators to determine agreement or dissonance with what faculty were telling her. Her study was qualitative; centered at one college. Although participants were "representative" of ethnic, age, and sex categories, they were, above all, unique individuals. The findings should not be considered generalizable in a quantitative sense as she would infer. Moreover, I question whether verifying findings with administrators is an appropriate way of "validating" self-perceptions.

Toman's findings rang true with what I understand, as a faculty member, and with Grubb's study. She found that instructors tend to feel isolated and somewhat initially unprepared for the teaching load; satisfied in fulfilling the social-equality mission of the community college; challenged by working with so many underprepared students; and benefiting from institutionally supported collaborative activities with colleagues.

In 1998, Corbin completed a similar study entitled, *Role Perceptions and Job Satisfaction in Community College Faculty*. His study combined quantitative and qualitative data from full-time faculty members at a single community college. He sent out 485 surveys, of which 177 were returned. Then he conducted focus groups with 20 of those respondents, in four separate groups of four to six participants each. His results showed that in general, faculty members are satisfied with their roles. The survey results showed no significant differences between the sexes or among various ethnic groups. However, the focus group findings showed that white males have more in common with black females and black males have more in common with white

females in terms of how their roles are perceived. The combined results also revealed that faculty members at this college saw their role as different than that at a four-year institution, principally as one in providing educational opportunities for disadvantaged and underprepared students. Once again, I feel that while these are interesting observations, the empirical data clearly show that these statements cannot be made as generalizations. Perceptions were not linked with student or faculty outcomes.

It was felt, by Corbin, that his study underlined the need to combine quantitative and qualitative methods. But I fail to see how the survey turned up information that was not discovered in the focus groups; moreover, it did not provide the interesting distinctions that Corbin drew out among White and African-American role perceptions. These distinctions, he hopes, will add to the improvement of college climates by increasing understanding. The significance of the study was in showing that satisfied faculty provide a source of strength and identity to the college atmosphere, which, he feels, is key to realizing the mission and values of the college. (Ironically, another qualitative study by Steinberg (1999), found that not only were faculty not familiar with the mission statement as many believed, but that their priorities did not always match those of the institution.)

Research into Organizational Change with Faculty

In none of the studies already mentioned was there any questioning of faculty perceptions of educational change, of its implementation, or of faculty involvement in organizational matters of decision-making. However, three other research projects in recent years did look into various aspects of these questions—those undertaken by Thaxter and Graham, McKenna, and Carlson-Dakes.

In the first, Thaxter and Graham (1999) performed a study seeking to gauge community college faculty's perception of their involvement in decision-making. They asked 100 faculty members, randomly selected at six community colleges in different states, to rate their level of involvement in five institutional categories. This study was about perceptions, but the categories and questions were predetermined by the researchers, making it, in my opinion, an odd fit of methodology. However, the survey was done in the hope of offering generalizability. Findings showed that faculty indicated real involvement in decision-making in only one area—that of course

content and curricular materials. Course and program development and student outcomes assessment came up close behind.

Faculty rating of administrative style—of those who have the true decision-making power in the other categories—was consistently low, with over half expressing anger and frustration at the autocracy and tight control Most participants felt that faculty were intentionally excluded from the decision-making processes. As a result, they have little sense of involvement in institutional goal setting, contributing to the budgeting process, or in formulating institutional policies. But this study did not measure the effectiveness of the leaders, nor how faculty could become more involved. The authors indicate that interviewing might help to explore these areas. A conclusion was that since faculty appear to be alike in their perceived sense of involvement, a more team-oriented management style would affect a large number of faculty in a similar way. But before faculty can be decision-makers, they need to be informed about the various issues having an impact on the college. (The study did not explore access to information or current levels of information sharing and dissemination.) The most important conclusion was that while decision-making involvement for the faculty may be "risky business" for the president, if leaders don't involve faculty, "they run the risk of alienating one of the most important constituencies on campus as well as missing out on a great source of ideas and innovations" (p. 672) and that "failure to engage faculty and modify administrative approaches may result in community colleges that fail to respond to the demands of today's world" (p. 673).

In the second of these studies, McKenna (1998) researched the application of a corporate cultural change model to an institution of higher education. The institute was not identified as either two-year or four-year; but was described as one developing an organizational restructuring plan under new leadership. The model used was Schein's cultural assessment and change model and the methodology was a combination of action research, observation and interviews, and the application of Strauss's grounded theory to organize the data.

Schein's model is one that proposes that an organization's structure is modified through assessing and changing the organization's culture (McKenna, 1998; Evans, 1996; Bergquist, 1992). The study's premise was that today's fast-changing environment requires quick and flexible response to environmental conditions, which

cannot be met by higher education's slow and incremental approach to organizational change. By applying Schein's model, the institution could assess the components of organizational culture and potential group behavior, and thereby assess the methods by which the leader could direct change in the institution. This was assuming, of course, that change happens "through leader-directed mechanisms" (p. 5).

McKenna's study found that the institution of higher education was not a unique culture, essentially different from business or religion, and that the uniqueness of education as a different social institution is more a question of perception than it is of reality. (One might argue the distinction between *perception* and *reality*. Perception is reality for most people.) McKenna found Schein's model to be useful in assessing organizational attributes, but that it did not adequately account for political influence on organizational decision processes, and recommended models that would, in the future, take this concern into use.

McKenna found resistance coming from influences that were inconsistent with a group's cultural assumptions. He noted that Sarason's explanation for ineffectiveness in implementing educational change was that academic institutions are mired in traditionalism and isolationism; he found this also to be true (1996, p. 221). The importance of culture in this study on implementing change is evident. Interestingly enough, the study did not refer to Evans (1996) in its literature review, but his book, *The Human Side of School Change*, refers a great deal to Schein's concept of implementing change, even enumerating five "tasks of change" that correspond significantly to Kotter's eight steps in bringing about change. Any leader contemplating McKenna's model of bringing about change may well want to read these sources.

Carlson-Dakes (1998) undertook an in-depth, two-year study that followed university faculty through an action-research model of implementing organizational change. The study documented his experience through the first cycle of a four-step process based on Palmer's movement approach to educational reform: (1) Isolated individuals stop leading divided lives, (2) they discover each other and form groups of mutual support, (3) then empowered by community they learn to translate private problems into public issues, and (4) alternate rewards emerge to sustain the movement's vision.

The researcher approached an existing teaching-enhancement program, called Creating a Collaborative Learning Environment (CCLE), and participated in ongoing collaborative meetings with faculty participants who had at least one year of experience with CCLE. He interviewed three faculty members several times individually to serve as case studies. His data confirmed the literature's view that faculty work is characterized as stressful, isolated, and competitive with high workload, inadequate time, and insufficient social support. With these issues as the focal point of participation in regular and frequent CCLE meetings, he found that the collaborative approach to personal and professional growth could stimulate outward diffusion of innovative ideas. The organizational change that he observed was the bringing about of transformation in teaching. The change occurred where faculty interests lay, and grew from a movement that had already begun. The CCLE provided a culture where change could occur in a safe, non-competing environment. In his study, the focus was not on change itself, but on teaching; and the goal of the research was to document actions taken and their results on faculty and organizational development. It would have been interesting to see, had administrators participated in the process, if the two different cultures would have similar success working together.

SUMMARY

This review of current literature has shown that social and economic pressures are bringing about change on a global scale. The community college, a public institution that reflects and responds to society's needs, is thus in a position of reinventing itself for the 21st century. Institutional changes currently being recommended and implemented to meet these needs have been shown to have little faculty involvement in the decision-making process. But most Liberal Arts faculty have been educated in a collegial culture, and expect input into all matters of education. Community college administrators, on the other hand, form a managerial culture, which tends to have different values and priorities than Liberal Arts faculty. Moreover, reports show that many administrators have little knowledge of what faculty actually do. Those who are mandating change initiatives do not seem to have the same view of them as those who are charged with implementing the changes.

To understand the concept of change and its effects from a faculty perspective, this research study needs to look at the context and culture of faculty participants in their community college. Context is best understood when political and economic influences are also examined, since the community college is part of a bigger system, locally and globally. And to better understand the faculty perspective of change, faculty need to be asked directly. Since faculty are most comfortable within a collegial culture, dialogue and discussion are exemplary methods for data collection.

Recent qualitative research has looked into faculty perceptions of their roles and concludes that faculty generally feel isolated, overworked, and unsupported, and that they miss the collegial aspects of their job. A study into a collaborative approach to faculty development shows that such an approach would appear to address those feelings and facilitate organizational as well as professional development. However, little research has been done to understand faculty's view of change and its effect on them. Faculty, as interrelated and interdependent parts of a community college, are naturally affected by the change that occurs. In addition, they are expected to be the facilitators of mandated change initiatives. Their perception of change will have a consequence on their actions and an influence on the evolution of the system.

Faculty, then, need to be heard and understood if change in the community college is to be undertaken successfully. To understand faculty interest and concerns, research questions must focus on what faculty themselves feel is needed to introduce change and ways that best meet their needs. Thematic analysis of the findings will help to identify areas of priority according to faculty needs, and may contribute to a better understanding of the complexities of educational change as perceived by faculty. Chapter 3 describes the methodology and design of the study that was used to carry out the research with these points in mind.

CHAPTER 3: DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Questions of method are secondary to questions of paradigm, which we define as the basic belief system or worldview that guides the investigator (Guba & Lincoln, 1995, p. 105).

As current literature makes clear, the community college is undergoing tremendous change and many theories have been proposed to deal with this change. But there are no documented studies of the effect of this change on faculty. As identified in Chapter 1, my research study's primary goal is to understand faculty perceptions, reactions, and insights around the issue of change in order to gain a better understanding of the implications of change in the community college.

In setting out to attain this goal, I wanted to better understand the feelings of faculty on an individual basis and in a group setting. My aim was not to provide a representative sample, but to focus on a particular group of faculty members who teach in the Liberal Arts, like me, in a typical community college. The methodological approach most appropriate for this type of reflective study is qualitative in nature. But it is important to note that even within qualitative studies, different theories guide the design of the research.

My own biases and perceptions of the way to conduct research have obviously had an effect on all aspects of this study, including choice of site and participants, data collection, ongoing literature research, data analysis, and conclusions. It would, therefore, be premature to discuss the methodology for this research without first addressing my research perspective and how I came to choose my methods of research and analysis.

Personal Research Perspective

The process of preparing a research proposal for this study forced me to reflect on my personal beliefs and the assumptions behind them in order to find an appropriate methodological approach. I soon realized that the tried-and-true research methods of positivistic inquiry would not work for me. My lived experience in different cultures and languages has made apparent to me that there are as many explanations for what a

person experiences as reality (or *truth*) as there are people in the world. In Proust's words, as cited in Patton (1990, p.36), "Thanks to [art], instead of seeing one world, our own, we see it multiplied . . . so many worlds are at our disposal." I felt that reducing human experience to positivistic research would not adequately explore the phenomenon I wanted to study. And I knew from experience that I couldn't remain an objective, unbiased observer of any human activity. An important precept of qualitative research is that it involves reflective understanding, which I value.

My background as a health-care worker and as a college instructor has made me aware of the social, interactive nature of human life. The fact that I would choose such professions is testimony that I feel a need to make a difference in the world. I have taught English and French as a second language and found it rewarding to see the empowerment that students gain (and that I myself have experienced) when a person can communicate in the language of the majority. I have also seen the many injustices that people experience at different times and in different situations in our society. For these practical reasons, I am attracted to the field of critical science and feminism with their basic tenets of equality, liberation, empowerment, and the premise that work or research should be practical and useful rather than purely theoretical. Postmodernism's stance that there is no one single truth, but that there are multiple realities, also rings true, given my experience.

Lather (1991) says "that the goal of emancipatory research is to encourage self-reflection and deeper understanding on the part of the researched at least as much as it is to generate empirically grounded theoretical knowledge" (p. 60). The researcher, as an active participant, is also the researched. As a feminist, and a quite radical one during my twenties and thirties, I have always been concerned with social justice—or more pointedly, with social injustice. I have also done a great deal of soul-searching and reading in psychoanalysis, religion, metaphysics, and philosophy. My conclusion is that the liberation a person needs is not always from oppressive forces outside, but sometimes from the oppression within. Life, work, and research, then, are about finding oneself as much as finding out about others.

My life has been one big search for who I am, and I have at every moment been painfully conscious of this search. Early on I rejected the concept of God because there seemed to be no logical explanation for its existence. But over the years I have

come to believe that all that exists is connected in some way—that there is an indescribable quality (what some call God) that connects and communicates to every atom on earth. It is that same invisible "energy" that Bateson (1997) refers to as mind.

Systems theory's premise, that the world is a complex whole of interdependent and interrelated elements and systems, and that all of nature is a living system, self-organizing, self-determining, and largely unpredictable to humans, has face validity for me. The butterfly-effect analogy illustrates how an action in a seemingly distant location can have a tremendous local effect. As Margaret Mead is credited to have professed, "Small groups of thoughtful, concerned citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Through my doctoral program, I came to understand that I am a social learner: I would argue, along with Vygotsky (1978), that it is a human quality to learn from and through society. He asserted that cognitive development is embedded in the context of social relationships. Vygotsky, like the psychoanalyst Chodorow (1999), claimed that although the cultural and social context shape our mind and our thinking, the affective and the intellectual unite to create the unique individual. Thought and feeling are interdependent and interrelated: Our imprint is on everything we observe and create. How then, could an honest researcher claim to be objective and unbiased?

I am naturally curious about the world and the people in it, and care about others' perceptions and realities. Qualitative inquiry is a good fit for me, and dialogue is the ideal method for obtaining the kind of information I need to serve as research data. It also seems obvious to me that in dealing with change, research mustn't stop at theory but should lead to informed action; that the action should contribute to social justice; and that it should make a difference in the lives of all participants involved, including me. Table 1, next page, provides a summary and comparison of the theories that have contributed to my epistemology and approach to research: These are contrasted against the positivistic approach. Each of these theories holds a basic tenet that is meaningful to me, and also gives rise to particular research methods required to remain true to its foundation and purpose. I took these components into consideration when determining which methodology was most appropriate to this particular study.

Table 1. Theories influencing the methodological perspective of this study, compared against positivism.

Theory	Positivism/ Empiricism	Systems Theory	Action Research	Critical Theory	Feminism	Dialogue	Post-Modernism
Authors	Newton Descartes Skinner	Bertalanffly, Bateson, Prigogine Bohm, Capra	Lewin Foote Whyte Reason Kemmis & Carr Argyris, Schön	Habermas Heidegger Husserl, Hegel Freire	Lather, hooks Collins, Frye Harding, Lakoff	Socrates, Buber, Shor, Freire Bohm, Senge, Isaacs	Lather Lacan, Chodorow Foucault, Lyotard, Derrida
Basic Tenets	Systems are machines made up of independent parts. Cause/Effect	Systems are made up of interdependent and interrelated parts.	Societies and organizations are systems. Any action, including research, affects the system and thus its parts.	In any group of people, some have less power than others (usually the minority), and are oppressed.	Women, who are the majority, are oppressed.	Any group of people can form a common consciousness & thought process.	Truth is relative; all observations are biased, dependent on language, culture, and personal qualities of observer.
Research Requirements	Must break down system into parts and analyze each part to understand workings. Statistics validate findings.	Must study parts in context to understand how system works. Breaking down into parts affects the functioning of the system.	Must research a problem that has meaning to researcher(s) and for a purpose. Must go through several cycles of research. Use whatever method works to collect data.	Must find & make known the oppression and find ways to empower and / or liberate the oppressed.	Must document & make public inequalities; find ways to change them. Researchers & participants work together as equals.	Must suspend beliefs, assumptions, & listen openly to diverse views. Be willing to learn & change to a profound level.	Must document according to researcher's understanding & bias, stating bias upfront. Cannot make generalizations.
Purpose of Research	Discover the objective, observable truth.	Understand the system—which is greater than the sum of its parts.	Create a beneficial change; preferably a solution to a (real) problem.	Ensure social justice and equality.	Enable self-empowerment and social justice for women.	Form a synergistic, shared understanding.	Tell it like it is so that others can draw their own conclusions/ truth. Que sera sera.

Phenomenological Approach

This research study aims to provide an understanding of the phenomenon of change as experienced by community college faculty. Patton (1990) states that "the point of using qualitative methods is to understand naturally occurring phenomena in their naturally occurring states" in order to gain a holistic or systemic overview of the phenomenon and context under study (p. 41). In order to do this, I needed to approach faculty in a community college setting. As I delved into the methods of entering into dialogue with such faculty to collect data, I realized that my approach could be defined as phenomenological.

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1998), "Researchers in the phenomenological mode attempt to understand the meaning of events and interactions to . . . people in particular situations" (p. 23). Van Manen (1990) describes phenomenology as the study of lived experience. For Gall, Gall, and Borg (1999) it is "reality as experienced by individuals" (p. 309). Miles and Huberman (1994) explain that the purpose of phenomenological enquiry is for "the researcher [to attempt] to capture data on the perceptions of local action 'from the inside,' through a process of deep attentiveness, of empathetic understanding (*l'erstehen*), and of suspending or 'bracketing' preconceptions about topics under discussion" (p. 6). The analysis is done with words (p. 7) and "the words are based on *observation*, *interviews*, or *documents*" (p. 9). The writing itself is an integral part of the research, not only explicating the phenomenon, but witnessing and validating it by bringing it into view.

Although Van Manen (1990) makes clear that "phenomenology does not problem solve" (p. 23), he does say that it "helps those who partake in it to produce action-sensitive knowledge," or in other words, "It is the progress of . . . humanizing human institutions to help human beings to become increasingly thoughtful and thus better prepared to act tactfully in situations" (p. 21). This research study follows the phenomenological framework as summarized in Table 2 on the next page. This table provides a definition of phenomenology, reviews its key concepts as mentioned above, and sets out the assumptions, the role of the researcher, and the methods of data collection and analysis. It also provides criteria for soundness, which are addressed later in the study, and which I will explain in more detail under Research Design.

Table 2. Phenomenological framework of the research study.

Methodology	Phenomenology: A deepened understanding of the meaning of lived experience (cf. Van Manen, Gadamer, Heidegger) My approach has been influenced by Systems Theory, Social/Critical Theory, Feminism, Post-modernism, Action Research, & Dialogue
Purpose	Deepen the understanding of the phenomenon of educational change—of its essence & of its effects as perceived by community college faculty Understand the subjective truth of a shared experience of faculty Produce action-sensitive knowledge for better-informed decision-making, with & for faculty
Assumptions	There is an essence to shared experiences Faculty share a common culture & experience The researcher shares that common experience as a faculty member The researcher can bracket her or his beliefs; not influencing participants' responses, but still participating in a reflective conversation with peers
Key Concepts	Bracketing: Listening without interference from preconceived notions; neutrality, recording data in good faith & with authenticity *Verstehen*: Empathic knowing or understanding Context is fundamental to understanding Truth is intersubjective: Understanding between researcher & participant
Role of Researcher	Immerses self in field setting Selects participants who have experienced the phenomenon of educational change & are willing to participate on a voluntary basis Interviews: Seeks shared understanding through dialogue Interacts as equal participant & facilitator of meaningful communication Clarifies & presents data, shares insights with participants
Ethical Considerations	Study contributes to education, not just researcher's career Researcher is trusting & trustworthy; endeavors to provide authentic representation of data Confidentiality & safety of participants & data are maintained throughout Participants are volunteers, free to withdraw at any time
Data Collection	Individual dialogic interview & group dialogue session Contextual Analysis: Observation, field notes, personal reflections, meeting attendance, as well as review of surveys, records, & documents Deep, rich description provides data that can be understood in ways other than through numbers—providing insights rather than generalizations Writing witnesses & validates the experience; as such, it is integral to the research process
Data Analysis	Classify & organize the statements, meanings, descriptions, and observations about the phenomenon Generate themes & patterns according to context, participants, & data Develop a textual & a structural description. Uncover the essence of the phenomenon. Present the findings in a clear & meaningful way
Criteria for Soundness	***Primary:*** Integrity, Authenticity, Credibility, Criticality ***Secondary:*** Explicitness, Thoughtfulness, Vividness, Congruence

Principal Questions

The phenomenon explored in this study was the nature and effect of educational change as perceived by community college faculty. The aim was to have faculty voice and interests authentically set forth, producing action-sensitive knowledge that might guide decision-making in the community college. To clarify and focus in on this double-edged goal, I began to formulate a set of guiding questions for the study.

At the onset of the research process, I first needed to establish context and background of the research site and of participants. Most faculty members had worked together in the same environment for some time, but I was new to this particular college and needed to familiarize myself. I also needed to identify sources of information to obtain appropriate data for analysis around faculty perceptions and needs. To address these considerations, I established the following principal questions:

1. What are the context and culture of this community college?
    a. What are its geographic, economical, and political characteristics?
    b. What are the educational and student population characteristics?
    c. What is the institutional culture?
2. What is the background of the faculty participants?
    a. How long has each participant taught at the college?
    b. What is her or his educational background?
    c. What is the subject area she or he teaches?
    d. What administrative experience does she or he have in education?
3. What are faculty's perceptions of change and its effects?
    a. What have been the participants' experiences with change?
    b. What are their issues, concerns and insights?
4. What do faculty want?
    a. What change is relevant or important to faculty? Why?
    b. What do faculty perceive is needed to introduce, implement, or maintain change in education?
    c. How best can faculty's needs regarding change be addressed?

Table 3 (below) presents the principal, guiding questions of the study and describes the methods used to obtain and analyze the necessary data in order to achieve the intended purpose. Methods ranged from collecting college documents, attending meetings, keeping field notes, and interviewing administrators and faculty. The answers to these principal questions provided both a focused and a larger view of the phenomenon.

Table 3. Principal guiding questions of the study.

QUESTIONS	METHODS	PURPOSE
1. **What is the context and culture of this community college?**	Review of college calendar, newsletters, web page, surveys, and other related materials Attendance at departmental meeting, faculty senate, and professional development forum Meetings and conversations with president, vice-president of education, deans, institutional researcher, and professional development coordinator Physical presence in the college	Understanding the context and history of educational change and the environment of the research field
2. **What is the background of the faculty participants?**	One-on-one dialogic interviews, group dialogue session, website consultation, informal conversation, and field observation Drafting of participant profiles	Understanding each person's background, values, and shared culture
3. **What are faculty's perceptions of change and its effects?**	One-on-one dialogic interviews, group dialogue session, websites, informal conversation, and field observation. Field notes Personal journal Drafting of participant profiles and summary for participant verification	Understanding perceptions of change and its effect on faculty Understanding issues and concerns Participant verification
4. **What do faculty want?**	One-on-one dialogic interviews and group dialogue session Attendance at departmental meetings, faculty senate, and forum College-wide survey results Field notes and personal journal	Discovering insights, needs and expectations Participant and researcher verification

Research Design

The methodological approach of phenomenology and the principal questions were the guiding factors in the design of the research. Ely, Anzul, Friedman, Garner, and Steinmetz (1991) note five common aspects of any qualitative research (p. 4) that were crucial to the approach I took: First, events need to be seen in context if they are to be understood adequately, thus the researcher must immerse herself in the setting. Second, the context of the inquiry is natural not contrived, thus nothing can be predefined or taken for granted. Third, the process is interactive in that those being studied speak for themselves through their words and actions. Fourth, the aim of the researcher is to understand the experience as unified, not as separate variables. And fifth, there is no one general or best methodology in qualitative research.

Before beginning data collection, however, I had some decisions to make. I needed to identify a field site for the research, establish a group of faculty who would be willing to participate, and coordinate my visits and presence in the field. I had to obtain informed consent from participants, set up interview and meeting dates, prepare materials and equipment, and establish criteria to ensure soundness of data collection and analysis. Most important, I needed to establish a timeline that would permit this research to be performed in a time-sensitive manner so as not to disturb participants' professional needs and schedules and still maintain interest and depth of participation. This section describes the actions I took to meet these requirements.

Entering the Field

Near my home are two community colleges that could be described as typical (one is the college where I teach), which afforded easy access for data collection. Both institutions provide a wide range of programs and services to the local community and have relatively large populations of students transferring to universities for further study. Since I felt it would be better to conduct my research where my own position would not be placed in jeopardy and where I was not involved with local gossip, I approached the vice-president of instruction at the college where I was not teaching. Luckily, my request was granted on the condition that the college's ethics committee give its approval. This approval process took several months, but the timing allowed

me to enter the field research site at the beginning of the fall term, when activities could be more flexibly scheduled than during final examinations as in the spring.

On entering the field, I met separately with the president, vice-president of instruction, and two deans responsible for Liberal Arts program areas (for this college, they included literature, humanities, social sciences, and the performing arts) to acquaint them with the context and purpose of my research and to obtain some background information about the community college. I also asked the vice-president and deans for assistance in selecting a few faculty members who might be interested in participating in my research, explaining that I would ask those participants for some more names, and hope for a snowball effect, to find approximately 10 volunteers.

The college generously provided me with an office, telephone, and photocopying privileges. These commodities permitted the luxury of establishing a presence on-site that allowed me to formally and informally contact and communicate with faculty. It also ensured confidentiality through a private room for interviews, discretely tucked away from the senior administrators' offices. For three months I became a familiar face and established a working relationship with faculty and support people. This presence also gave me the opportunity to observe the cultural and institutional climate and to gather documents for analysis.

Participant Selection

My selection criteria were purposeful. I wanted faculty participants from a wide sampling of the Liberal Arts area who had experienced or were familiar with some form of educational change in a community college context and might be interested in talking to me about their perceptions. I was also looking for a range of viewpoints—older, experienced, full-time/tenured instructors, as well as younger, part-time, and those involved in semi-administrative areas (chairs, faculty senate, or union).

My definition of Liberal Arts faculty focused on those who instruct courses in associate degrees that would lead to a BA degree (not BSc) on transfer to a four-year institution (such as English, History, Psychology, and Sociology). Courses taught in the Liberal Arts are also commonly known as academic or University Transfer (UT). Some of these courses necessarily straddle several domains: Geography and

Psychology contribute equally to a BSc and courses such as Communications may also form part of a professional or vocational program.

My choice of Liberal Arts faculty was deliberate. My own teaching background and interest in the Liberal Arts would afford me the possibility of working with faculty in a culture with which I'm familiar. I was able to be close enough to understand and empathize with their views (*Verstehen*), yet distant enough—at a neighboring college, with peers who were not close colleagues—so that I had fewer dangers of becoming emotionally invested in personality and political issues that would cloud my perspective. Another, equally important, reason for choosing the Liberal Arts area is that the courses are not as easily seen to provide job-ready skills. To the general public, these courses are not as overtly applicable to immediate work as those courses in the professional and technical areas. As I had discovered when working as a coordinator of change initiatives, such innovations as Learning Outcomes and Prior Learning Assessment, mandated by the government and administration, were not always seen by many faculty to be related or applicable to the Liberal Arts. For this reason, change could have a particular connotation to these faculty—one that was deeper or more hidden, and less apparent on the surface—which provided me all the more reason to do research. My aim was to go beyond assumptions.

I anticipated that out of 16 invitations to interested possible faculty candidates (see Appendix A), I would receive approximately 10 positive responses. In fact, I received 16, and had the possibility of recruiting even more once I had started. I followed up by interviewing the first 16 who volunteered, then arranged a group dialogue meeting, which six of the original participants attended. Faculty members were welcoming, generous, flexible, and very willing to help me. It seemed that my research topic had struck a chord of familiarity as I found that the topic of educational change was already the subject of much informal conversation. But faculty also made me aware of the time restrictions, which motivated me to complete the research in a timely manner.

Dialogic Interviews with Participants

To guide the interview process, I formulated a list of 10 questions to address with each of the faculty participants (see Appendix C) during the individual interviews. The

questions were used as a guide to "break the ice" and get acquainted, to learn more about the participant's background, and to converse on aspects of change relevant to the study. Because I was interested in uncovering perceptions and personal concerns and insights, I conducted dialogic interviews intended to encourage thoughtful response, rather than adhering to standardized interviews with a formally structured set of questions. As mentioned in Chapter 1, a dialogic interview takes on more of a conversational format than a strict question-answer format. The purpose is to eliminate the hierarchical interviewer-respondent relation and enable enough flexibility to focus on the participant's point of view and personal insights.

Although I gently steered participants back to the general questions when the conversation seemed to wander, I found that each person tended to attach more attention and significance to certain change issues, so I encouraged them to speak freely as needed. Not all questions were addressed uniformly; however, the varied responses provided me the opportunity to better understand areas of importance and to pick up non-verbal cues and other related information. I tuned into interests and insights regarding change that had not been foreseen in the original questions. These dialogic interviews lasted from one to two hours each.

Group Dialogue Session

As a follow-up to the individual sessions, I extended an invitation to all participants (see Appendix D) to come to a group dialogue session where we could continue together the discussions that had begun one-on-one and perhaps come up with a group perspective on educational change. I prepared a rough agenda as a guide for this two-hour session (see Appendix E). We first introduced ourselves, since not all participants knew each other well. They did know each other as colleagues in the Liberal Arts, and learned at that moment that they had each participated in an interview session with me. Until that point identities had remained confidential. Furthermore, I did not reveal the names of those participants who didn't attend the group session, although most did not consider it a secret and shared the information with colleagues themselves.

I reintroduced my topic and provided a brief overview of my preliminary findings. I then presented the agenda with guiding questions related to main themes that were

emerging. We used that information as a springboard, and the conversation took on its own life. Tape-recording was not an option—for technical reasons and because it would intrude too much on the informal nature of the session. I chose instead to take notes on the dialogue and to later submit to each participant a summary of the discussion themes and quotations for verification and comment. I provided snacks and refreshments and a short break. The session lasted for almost two hours, including the break and informal discussions on entering the room.

Participant Verification

As an integral and ongoing part of the research process, I confirmed with participants that my interpretation of findings was authentic and true to their intended meanings through the process of participant verification (also known as member-checking). Following transcription of the interviews, I provided each participant with a personal profile and selection of quotes from which I would choose illustrations of my thematically organized findings. I also assigned pseudonyms to ensure confidentiality of the information. In the accompanying letter (see Appendix F), I gave a preliminary view of the themes and direction of my data presentation and analysis and invited comment and revision to attempt a clear representation of the intent of their words and to guard against their being misinterpreted or misrepresented. Participants in the group dialogue session were also given a summary of the meeting with a collection of quotations under each represented theme.

The summaries were returned to me with very few revisions or remarks, indicating to me that participants were satisfied with the portrayal. I followed up with a short, thank-you note to everyone, and included my phone number, inviting them to call me if there was anything else to add or change. Several participants I ran into informally indicated that time constraints had not allowed a much deeper review on their part (which, in itself, is informative), but that they found no problems with the summaries.

Ethical Considerations

The participants in this research study were volunteers and all signed informed consent forms (see Appendix B); but even though they came of their own volition,

I still had ethical considerations to be addressed. In Seashore's words (1982 "Naïveté [about ethics] itself is unethical," as quoted in Huberman and Miles (1994, 288). Among the issues that concerned me was whether participants would feel this project was worthwhile, and if they knew what they were getting into. Along with those concerns was the question of risk and benefit—to the participants, to the institution, and to me. I also wanted to make sure that participants would have access to me and to their personal information and data whenever needed, so I provided my home phone number as well as my office number at the college, my e-mail address, my fax number, and my home address.

To address my concerns for ethical integrity, I turned to the framework proposed in Huberman and Miles (1994, 288–297) and answered their guiding questions:

- ***Worthiness of the project:*** This study aims to contribute in some significant way to provide action-sensitive knowledge regarding faculty needs and informed decision-making in educational change.
- ***Competence boundaries:*** I took care to ensure I had the expertise and resources to carry out the study and ensure it would be of good quality.
- ***Informed consent:*** Participants had full information about what the study would involve and their part in it. Consent was given freely and not coerced by me or by administration.
- ***Benefits, costs, and reciprocity:*** Participants would gain a platform for their voice from having invested their time and energy to this process. I took precautions that they would not be penalized for participating.
- ***Harm and risk:*** This study was not intended or likely to hurt, physically or emotionally, the people involved.
- ***Honesty and trust:*** The foundation of my relationship with the participants was my physical presence, open communication, and shared experience in the Liberal Arts. I answered questions honestly, with no intent of deceit.
- ***Privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity:*** Information was confidential and guarded. Sensitive documents were kept in a safety deposit box. Anonymity was not guaranteed, but complete confidentiality was assured.

- ***Research integrity and quality:*** My study was conducted thoughtfully and carefully at all times, according to my framework of phenomenological research and these ethical standards.
- ***Use and misuse of results:*** I assured that I would take every measure possible so that my findings would not be used inappropriately, or to harm or wrong participants.

Questions concerning these ethical issues did arise during the interviews and communication with faculty. The most important concern, I found, was the maintaining of confidentiality. I took all measures possible to hold true to my word, accepting alterations to participant profiles to make them less explicit. I also assured that these profiles would not appear in any publication outside of this research report.

Strategies for Ensuring Soundness

Any research project must be able to stand up to criteria of quality if it is to be taken seriously and considered sound and of use. Empirical, or positivistic, studies label this quality of soundness *validity*. According to Whittenmore, Chase, and Mandle in a recent article (2001, July), "Validity is defined by the dictionary as the state or quality of being sound, just, and well-founded" (p. 522), which makes it a practical term and just as useful in qualitative research. Traditionally, however, the term *validity* is reserved for quantitative studies; several other terms have been suggested for use with qualitative studies, including *worthiness*, *authenticity*, *soundness*, and *reliability* (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Gall, Gall, & Borg, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Huberman & Miles, 1994). As Thorne (1997) explains, the purpose of ensuring validity, or soundness, is to satisfy the need for assurance that the interpretations reveal some truth external to the investigator's own experience. For this research study, I have adapted the framework of criteria provided by Whittenmore, Chase, and Mandle (2001). The criteria for ensuring soundness are presented in two layers: Primary Criteria and Secondary Criteria. They are described as follows on the next page:

Primary Criteria:

1. ***Criticality***: Do the results of the research reflect the experience of the participants or context in a believable way?
2. ***Integrity***: Does a representation of the *emic* perspective exhibit awareness to the subtle difference in the voices of all participants?
3. ***Credibility***: Does the research process demonstrate evidence of critical appraisal?
4. ***Authenticity***: Does the research reflect recursive and repetitive checks of validity as well as a humble presentation of findings?

Secondary Criteria:

1. ***Explicitness***: Have methodological decisions, interpretations, and investigator biases been addressed?
2. ***Thoroughness***: Do the findings convincingly address the questions posed through completeness and saturation?
3. **Creativity**: Have imaginative ways of organizing, presenting, and analyzing data been incorporated?
4. ***Vividness***: Have thick and faithful descriptions been portrayed with artfulness and clarity?
5. ***Congruence***: Are the process and the findings congruent? Do all the themes fit together? Do findings fit into a context outside the study situation?
6. ***Sensitivity***: Has the investigation been implemented in ways that are sensitive to the nature of human, cultural, and social contexts?

During the research process, I followed these criteria to keep my study on track, although it was challenging and not always possible to do perfectly. But the framework was a useful tool in guiding me through the process. I review this framework again in Chapter 7 as evidence of meeting criteria for soundness and quality.

The Research Process

Throughout the entire research process, I followed several techniques to ensure that the study would adhere to the various criteria set out in this chapter. As part of the design process, I sought different sources for data collection: individual dialogic interviews; group dialogue session; document analysis; informal interviews with administrators, professional development coordinator, and an institutional researcher; attendance at various forums; and informal contact and communication. I made a purposeful sampling: inviting interested faculty and refusing no volunteer; obtaining

informed consent from all participants and others interviewed; and advising that no part of the participation was mandatory. I also attempted to ensure that each part of the procedure was transparent and clear, with appropriate checks and balances.

During the data generation and collection, I tape-recorded and transcribed the dialogic interviews, made field notes, and kept an agenda and journal. Two interviews did not record clearly, so I repeated them through telephone conversations and an immediate follow-up summary for review. I maintained confidentiality by performing the interviews in a private room, assigning a pseudonym to each participant, never identifying any material with actual names, and keeping consent forms and audio-tapes in a security deposit box. I became acquainted with each of the participants and completed the interviews before forming a group of participants for a dialogue session. During the dialogue session, I participated equally in the discussion and kept notes. The summary and quotations from this meeting were also sent out for participant verification. I provided short reports, both written and oral, to faculty members and administrators on the progress of my research along the way.

During the data analysis phase, I made several passes over the generated material, assigning themes at different intervals and checking for fit. I also organized the information according to participant profiles and to the principal guiding questions. In this way, I was able to come up with a thematic framework for the basis of presentation and discussion of findings in the following chapters. The profiles, themes, and quotations were checked for fact and for intention by the participants. College summaries and information were checked by the college's institutional researcher, the professional development coordinator, statistical reports, web pages, and by me in several passes.

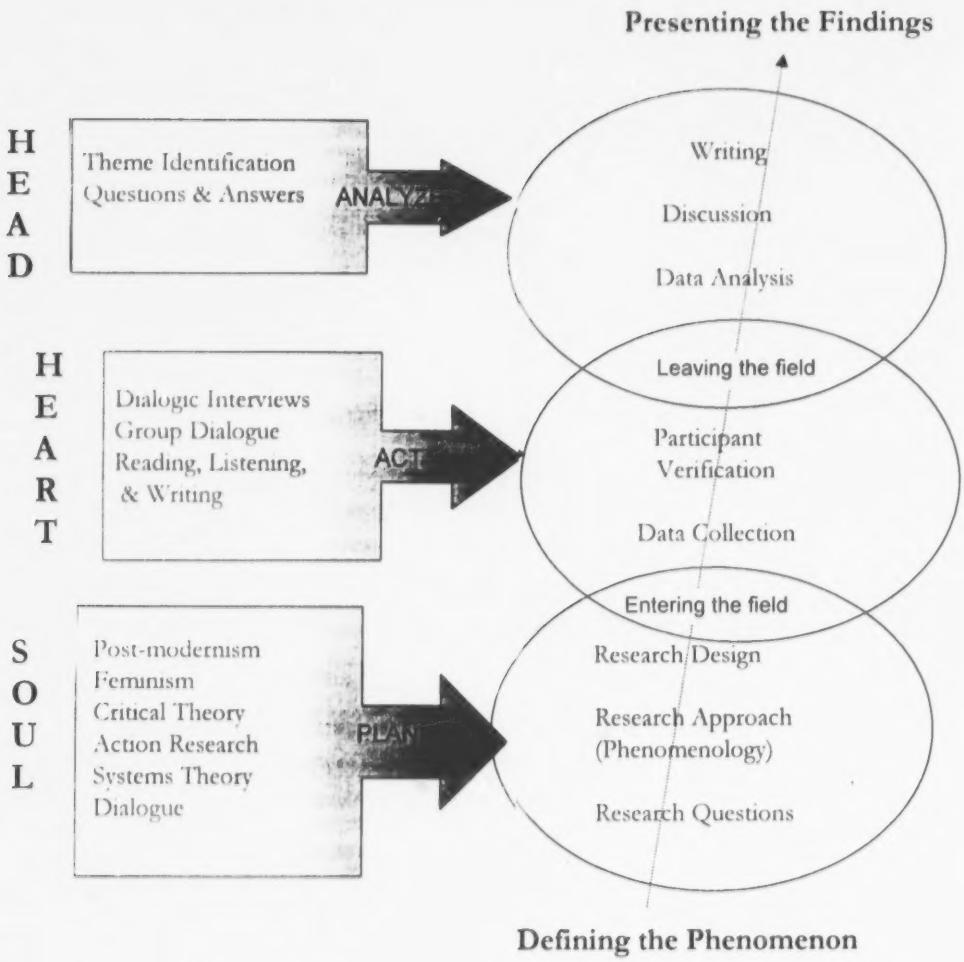
Members of my committee also guided me through the collection and writing process. In the next chapters, where I present my findings, I support my interpretations with evidence and illustrations from my data. The paper trail that I kept made this a relatively easy task. The amount of data generated ensured that descriptions would be thick, in depth and in breadth.

SUMMARY

The process of developing, designing, and carrying out this research study from the definition of the phenomenon to the presentation of the findings is illustrated in the Figure on the next page. I have identified three stages of research: (1) Plan; (2) Act; and (3) Analyze; which also correspond to the researcher's involvement from the (1) Soul; (2) Heart; and (3) Head. As illustrated, the study involved a great deal of preparation and personal investment as well as adherence to research standards.

In conducting this study, I had every intent to make it rigorous and academic, because I sincerely believe that faculty are a group to be taken seriously in any planning or decisions to be made concerning education. To ensure quality, I consulted the works of well-known researchers in education and developed frameworks to guide me through the choice of methodology, research design, data collection, analysis, and presentation of findings. I carried out this research study to the best of my abilities and in a timely manner and I adhered to standards of ethics and quality.

My role in this study varied at different stages. In the interviews and dialogue session, I was as an initiator of questions, coordinator, and co-participant. After, I was a transcriber and recorder. During field research, I was a note-taker, researcher, interviewer, and reporter. Throughout the process, I was fact-checker, data analyst, and writer. As an active participant, my own judgment was natural and expected. My intimate familiarity with educational change initiatives and my experience as a Liberal Arts faculty member informed me and enhanced the research process. This depth and breadth of experience also contributed richly to the collection of data. After all, the principal research instrument of a qualitative research study is the researcher.



Three stages of the research process.

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CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF CONTEXT

Contextuality is the idea that elements of a system are not atoms standing in mechanical relationships to each other and further that they exist together in time (Vaill, 1989, p. 122).

According to systems thinking, events do not happen in isolation, and meaning is not independent of context. Patton (1990) explains that a "systems perspective is important . . . in dealing with and understanding real-world complexities, viewing [phenomena] as whole entities embedded in context and still larger wholes" (p. 78). Gall, Gall, and Borg (1999) make the important point that "the particular beliefs and activities of groups or individuals can only be understood in reference to the unique context in which they occur (p. 364). Therefore, before beginning analysis of the data, I provide a description of the environment in which the data were collected as a preliminary step to data analysis. The data collection is thus presented in three phases as follows:

- ***Phase I.*** Chapter 4: Presentation of Context
- ***Phase II:*** Chapter 5: Dialogic Interview Themes
- ***Phase III:*** Chapter 6: Group Dialogue Themes

Hall (1977), as cited in Vaill (1996), establishes five characteristics of context: (a) the subject or activity that is the event itself, (b) the kind of situation the event is occurring in, (c) the roles and statuses of those involved, (d) the individuals' past experiences with situations containing these same contextual factors, and (e) the way the situation is defined by the broader culture within which it is occurring (p. 165). This chapter addresses these characteristics as identified by Hall, although a deeper discussion of the concept of change and of faculty's past and present experience with change has been reserved for Chapters 5 and 6.

To gain a better understanding of the general context of the college, I gathered field notes and data from college newsletters and documents and from a recent employee satisfaction survey. I spoke to the president, vice-president of instruction,

the two deans responsible for faculty in Liberal Arts areas, the institutional researcher, and the coordinator of faculty development. I also attended a departmental meeting and a meeting of the faculty senate. Individual interviews with faculty participants provided the background information for the participant profiles. This research was to address the first two principal questions of the study as identified in Chapter 3:

1. What is the context and culture of this community college?
    a. What are its geographic, economical, and political characteristics?
    b. What are the educational and student population characteristics?
    c. What is the institutional culture?
2. What is the background of the faculty participants?
    a. How long has each participant taught at the college?
    b. What is her or his educational background?
    c. What is the subject area she or he teaches?
    d. What administrative experience does she or he have in education?

Research Site

Warren College sits near a river in an urban center along the Pacific Coast. The college was founded in 1970 during a time of enthusiasm and hope—the halcyon days of community colleges—when classes were conducted in high schools, church basements, and trailers, while the main building was being constructed.

Since that time, the college has grown to comprise three campuses, all within commuting range of each other, and to serve over 12,000 credit students—a 750% increase from the original enrollment of 1,600. Senior administration is housed in the largest, main campus. Administrators visit the other campuses, usually about once a week or as needed. Some faculty call one campus their home and teach all their courses at that campus, while many commute to two or all three campuses during the week. Approximately 60% of faculty are full-time and tenured, providing over 80% of the instruction in credit courses. Virtually all faculty are members of the union, which also serves as their professional association. About 60% hold master's degrees, and another 20% have doctorates, most of whom teach in the Liberal Arts.

Because of its central location, students are generally from the community and within easy commuting access of the college. Most are working lower- and middle-class, and come from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds: about half report using another language, usually Asian, at least occasionally at home. There is also a substantial international population—mainly Asian students studying abroad—and ESL is an important program area for both international and domestic students.

Warren is in many ways a typical community college in the Northwest Pacific region. However, a greater balance of its programs are concentrated in academic areas, thus the institution resembles a junior college, even though it does not grant degrees. Its reputation is established as a major feeder to the local universities and it has a considerable student population (almost 60% of enrollment) in university transfer courses. The next largest population is career and technical (32%), with a limited developmental enrollment (6%) and even fewer students in vocational programs (3%). University Transfer is therefore a major function, and the Liberal Arts occupy a prominent position in the college profile.

According to internal statistics, in 1986, 78% of the students in academic studies were 18-24 years of age, compared to 66% in 1981. The trend seems to have continued, with most students in Liberal Arts younger than in career and technical programs and younger than the average student in the college at the time the college was founded. This tendency is reflected in other colleges as well, although Warren has a proportionately higher number of youth because of its weighted distribution toward academic courses. For the most part, these students are arriving directly out of high school and are looking for the opportunity to discover where their interests lie.

The campuses are in near-full operation all year round, from 8:00 AM to 10:00 PM, with an increasing availability of credit courses during the summer, and weekends and evening time slots filled with continuing education, community activities, and customized training programs. In fact, the college cannot accommodate all who apply, with as many as 10 registration attempts for every seat filled in certain courses. And as many as 50% students who are attending are not able to get all the courses they would like in their preferred semester. As stated in the college newsletter, dated October 2001, "There just aren't enough classes to meet the demand." Thus the policy of open access creates a paradox that is common to most community colleges today.

Warren College expanded considerably in the 1990s, while government funding to support this growth decreased. Plans to add more classroom and faculty space were dashed when the government announced severe cutbacks in 2001, just as I entered the scene to do research. The announcement to stop building expansion foreshadowed further government announcements that funding would be strictly limited. Coincidently, just as I was researching to find out about the effects of change on education, the college was suddenly confronted with a major event. It is currently facing a core-services review to determine priorities and future plans, given the government's new mandate to curtail expenses and cut budgets in the public sector.

Until this moment, the college had enjoyed two decades of growth and relative stability, mainly under one president. But when he retired, a difficult adjustment period included the "year of three presidents." The current president is settling in and establishing a voice and culture, after approximately three years since being hired. Things have calmed down considerably, but the internal turmoil and shuffling that occurred during the transitional period seems to have left their trace; and many faculty seem to still be wary and hesitant in regards to management.

The recent years have seen greater involvement by staff and faculty in matters concerning the college. Governance is shared, with the Board retaining the official voice, the faculty senate providing a recognized contribution to policies and direction to curriculum, and the faculty union holding an influential position. Recently, the college's Statement of Values was redrafted through a collaborative and inclusive process that has satisfied most of the community, following the precedent a year or two earlier in developing a Master Education Plan.

A survey conducted in March 2001 on Work Satisfaction and Workplace Relationships revealed that 98% of staff (including faculty) felt that the work they do is important and 97% care about the future of the college: 84% are firmly committed to quality. On the negative side, 74% feel that over the last five years, the work that is expected of them has increased and many (65%) have observed burnout among colleagues. A large number (47%) do not feel that all employee groups (faculty, staff, administration) are treated equitably (20% are neutral), and they note that morale and organizational climate are not healthy. Perhaps some of these feelings are related to

the changes and turmoil over restructuring and the presidential turnover. These possibilities were explored in my research.

A summary of the general characteristics of Warren College is provided in Table 4, below. It provides statistics on students, faculty, administration, and the college itself as a background sketch, as well as brief descriptive information on the college mission and on faculty professional development, which is discussed next.

Table 4. Profile of Warren College

Mission & Values (Summary)	Typical of a comprehensive community college: Open admissions, student-centered philosophy; Commitment to social and personal development; career preparation and foundations for further learning
Location & Size	Pacific Coast in an urban-suburban area Three campuses within 15-mile radius Main campus established in 1970
Students	12,000 credit students Mainly from upper-working and lower-middle class Also some international students 50% use language other than English at home 70% in 17-24 age group
Program Enrollment	University Transfer: 60% Career & Technical: 32% (mainly Business, Health & Human Services) Preparatory Studies: 6% (including Developmental Studies) Vocational: 3% (Strong enrollment demand overall)
Faculty	550 (approximate) 75% full-time, 60% tenured; strong union 60% hold masters', 20% hold doctorate degrees
Faculty Development	Grassroots approach (faculty driven) Faculty coordinators on time release Workshops, forums, reading circles, meetings, drop-ins Two all-campus, day-long forums per year Recent topic concentration: Technology, Learning Communities
Administration	President, four vice-presidents, seven deans for all three campuses Administrative offices officially housed in main campus; visiting offices on other campuses Shared Governance: Board, Administration, and Faculty Senate

Professional Development for Change Initiatives

Warren College has a well-established professional development program for faculty that is coordinated by faculty—typically one instructor on full-time release or two instructors on half-time release each. The coordinating positions are renewable every two years, and are filled through a search process that is open to all faculty who teach at the college. The coordinator consults with faculty, administration, and the union (which also serves as the faculty's professional association) to determine the most pressing concerns and faculty needs. The identified areas are addressed through a program of workshops, forums, reading circles, meetings, and drop-ins during the school year. Planned events are very much considered "grassroots," by and for faculty.

Recently the emphasis has been on technology, since "half the instructors are not on e-mail, and a quarter or more are not on computer," according to the current coordinator. "So we're concentrating on ed-tech, Web CT, and on-line instruction this year." The professional development committee has also addressed pedagogical techniques and delivery methods, and promoted the exploration of learning communities and team teaching. In the fall, professional development also provides a faculty orientation. The latest innovation has been the addition of two college-wide forums per year, with classes canceled and the library closed the entire day to enable all faculty and most staff to attend. The theme is determined as near as possible to the scheduled date so that the most urgent and topical issues can be approached. Typically, these forums involve guest speakers, informed panels, a question-and-answer period, and sometimes breakout sessions.

Most recently (7 November 2001), the professional development committee addressed the issue of the core-services review in response to the government's notice that future funding would be severely restricted. The forum involved a panel discussion of the related issues and possible fall-out of the expected budget cuts. Faculty, therefore, found out about the proposed measures just as the government was making its preliminary announcement. The forum provoked a lively discussion of the implications and the panel's promise of a follow-through in the spring to see how events were unfolding. This forum fell at the end of my data collection and comments from it were therefore not included in my findings. It will be interesting to see if

events at the follow-up forum scheduled in early spring 2002 correlate in any way with my findings.

Administrative Views on Issues Facing Warren College

Informal discussions with the president, vice-president of instruction, the institutional researcher, and two deans at the college revealed that the institution is experiencing uncertain times. They felt they were in a difficult position to speculate on the future. However, there was consensus that budget cutbacks were likely to have an impact on the college, although no one could predict how severe. The government would not be making official announcements until the spring of 2002.

Issues identified as being important considerations included globalization and the shifting mission of the community college, which may ultimately affect the function and roles of Liberal Arts faculty. It seemed obvious that the public sector was seeing a need for emphasis on post-secondary education and that it would hold an important place in the global market, but the implications of those needs are yet known. All administrators who were interviewed expressed the concern that privatization seemed to be a greater "threat" than the education-technology debate. One dean surmised that online education wasn't creating immediate competitiveness, but noted that private colleges had recently begun articulating with the universities and were selling education as a service. Competition results because "private schools have low overhead because they can pay non-union instructors less and they don't provide counseling and student services. The concept of education is no longer seen as a public good." Put succinctly, "public education is a fiscal crisis waiting to happen." Various remarks were also made by the deans around the open-access policy and its consequences:

> Statistically, we see that students are less prepared in reading and writing. In the early 80s, there was concern across the system about reading, writing, and critical thinking. Then it subsided. Now we seem to be hearing about it again; particularly with the influx of ESL students. We have also found that it is getting more difficult for students to transfer to university without a full Associate degree. Universities are selecting students according to GPA, and we're experiencing a gap in their expectations and what community college students generally achieve. The colleges are largely made up of students whose grades didn't allow them to enter university in the first place. Not all of them have the ability to suddenly see a rise in their grades. (Warren College Dean)

As for the mission, one dean expressed the view that, "We will always be student centered and teaching focused rather than research oriented. That sets us apart form the universities and will continue to." Although there have been changes over the years, as noted by another dean, the education process has remained pretty much standard. "The forces to maintain the status quo are strong out there. The average age of faculty is about 55, so there is unlikely to be substantial change for another decade."

Faculty Participants

As mentioned in Chapter 3, faculty members were selectively invited to participate in this study. As a faculty member in Communications myself (although at another college) I wanted to talk to faculty who shared a similar professional culture to mine, and chose the Liberal Arts as the defining area. I approached the deans responsible for the subject areas generally considered to be in the Liberal Arts (History, Sociology, Literature, and so on), and asked for a few names of faculty who might be interested in participating in the survey. I approached these faculty members, who then suggested other names, and so on, until I had a pool of 16 potential respondents.

Although I had hoped for 8 to 12 participants, all 16 agreed to participate, which resulted in one faculty member each from Music, Anthropology, Applied Communication, Geography, and History; three from English Literature; and two each from Sociology, Philosophy, Political Science, and Psychology. This group also comprised two new instructors, two instructors who had begun teaching at the founding of the college, eight who had served as chair, and one who was an executive in the union. Seven instructors were men and nine were women. Experience teaching in community colleges ranged from less than one year to over 30 years, with a cumulative of 202 years and a median of eight years. Educational background of the faculty participants included 11 doctorates and five master's degrees.

The dialogic interviews I held with the faculty participants began with a few questions about their personal and professional background to better understand their worldview. Using information from these interviews, I prepared a profile and pseudonym for each participant and included a short summary of their past experience and interest to establish background. For purposes of confidentiality, I have not included these profiles in this report.

Most of the participants had traveled to other countries and had pursued studies in a variety of locations throughout North America. Many were active in community service and family-related activities, several had lectured at universities and even been invited to teach and speak internationally, several others had published more than one book, and a few had written articles for local and national presses. All mentioned stresses in juggling their personal and professional lives throughout their careers—many had children still at home—and of the extra duties and responsibilities they also carry at work. Many participants spoke enthusiastically of innovations in teaching and college programs that they had spearheaded and in which they had played active roles. These activities ranged from setting up a model United Nations, to developing authentic materials and innovative curriculum, and establishing new interdisciplinary programs and Associate degrees. They spoke of the persistence and perseverance needed to get these activities off-ground, especially with a lack of sufficient funding and support for new ideas. Every instructor spoke of the value and rewards of teaching in the community college, yet not one mentioned that she or he had studied with the intention of becoming an instructor, and most noted that they had ended up in the community college largely by accident. Some instructors were approaching retirement in the next few years.

The faculty I spoke to for this study were, for the most part, eager to speak about their experience with change in education. They had all seen the introduction of various initiatives during recent years, and many could recall a range of change efforts over a period of two or three decades. Two participants mentioned educational mandates they themselves had "endured" during their time in grade school, which had later been reversed when these efforts proved unsuccessful. Others, who had gone back to graduate school in their adult years, spoke of innovations such as team teaching and group work from their experiences as students. Most faculty referred to "outcomes-based learning" and "student-centered learning" as two recent initiatives that were still fresh on their minds and which served as examples for discussion. Other change events that were brought up were not directly related to mandates, but were considered "naturally occurring." The topic of change was a rich subject to explore with faculty—and provided insight into many aspects of the community college.

Although faculty participants came from every program area represented by the Liberal Arts at Warren College, each member brought their own unique personality and perceptions to the dialogues. Faculty in the same subject area shared much in common, but didn't necessarily agree on all points of view. Their concerns did, however, relate very much to the general role of the Liberal Arts and University Transfer courses in the community college rather than to the specifics of professional or vocational programs. They had strong beliefs regarding their mission and purpose in preparing students for work, careers, family life, and citizenship. These issues were brought up often in the dialogue sessions and are discussed in more detail later.

Faculty participants had been thinking and informally discussing the topic of change for some time, individually and among themselves. They were ready and willing to discuss it in the context of this research. And they had very clear ideas on ways to make the implementation of change more successful and meaningful in their lives and in the future of the community college.

SUMMARY

In this chapter, I presented a detailed description of the research context through a profile of Warren College and of the faculty participants. This presentation of Phase I of the data analysis addressed the first two principal questions of the research study concerning the context of the college and the background of the participants.

The community college is situated on the Pacific Coast in an urban center, and serves a population of approximately 1200 students who come largely from a middle, working-class background. The student age is relatively young, compared to other community colleges, because the majority of students have recently completed high school before enrolling in university transfer courses. Less than one-third of program offerings are in the career and technical area, with a small percentage devoted to developmental and vocational studies. The mission and values of the college reflect student-centeredness and responsiveness to community needs in a rapidly changing society. Although Warren College has seen a continual period of growth over the last three decades, it is now facing budgetary restrictions due to government cutbacks.

Sixteen faculty members participated in the study, with community college teaching experience ranging from less than one year to 32 years. Educational qualifications included 11 doctorates and five master's degrees. All the college's Liberal Arts subject areas were represented, including English Literature, Applied Communications, Music, Geography, Psychology, Sociology, Anthropology, Philosophy, History, and Political Science. Seven faculty had served as chair of their department, one participant was a union executive, and 14 had worked on committees with the dean and had some acquaintance with administrative duties. All had experienced and were familiar with educational change. One participant had been a faculty development coordinator, some had developed new courses and programs, several had implemented innovations, and all had introduced some form of change in their curriculum or teaching. Several instructors were approaching retirement.

Now that the field setting and participants have been introduced, in the two following chapters I present the information collected from the dialogic interviews and from the dialogue session, organized according to the themes that emerged.

CHAPTER 5: DIALOGIC INTERVIEW THEMES

Making something of a text of or a lived experience by interpreting its meaning is more accurately a process of insightful invention, discovery, or disclosure (Van Manen, 1990, p. 79).

This chapter continues from Phase I, the contextual analysis, and enters into the analysis of data by presenting the findings from Phase II, the dialogic interviews. This discussion of the findings addresses principal guiding Question 3 and Question 4 of the study as follows:

3. What are faculty's perceptions of change and of its effects?
    a. What have been the participants' experiences with change?
    b. What are their issues, concerns, and insights?
4. What do faculty want?
    a. What change is relevant or important to faculty? Why?
    b. What do faculty feel is needed to introduce, implement, or maintain change in education?
    c. How best can faculty's needs regarding change be addressed?

The procedure I use to present and discuss the findings is thematic analysis. In qualitative studies, data analysis is not a mechanical procedure. As defined by Bogdan and Biklen (1998), data analysis is the process of systematically searching and arranging the transcripts, fieldnotes, and other materials to increase understanding of them and to present the data to others (p. 157). This process begins by organizing the data into manageable units to reveal emerging patterns of concepts, ideas, or themes. Van Manen (1990) clarifies that "the notion of theme" refers to an element that "occurs frequently in the text" (p. 78). More specifically, "Theme analysis refers to the process of recovering the theme or themes that are embodied and dramatized in the evolving meanings and imagery of the work" (p. 87).

During the field research with participants, certain aspects of educational change recurringly came up in interviews and in college documents. As I discovered patterns, I brought them up in the dialogic interviews and asked participants to offer their

comments and perspectives on them; and later, I addressed these findings more specifically in the group dialogue session. The patterns and themes that emerged during the data collection took on shape and defined themselves even more clearly as I wrote about them.

Although I conducted the dialogic interviews with participants around a framework of interview questions (see Appendix C), the conversations tended to take the direction of individual faculty preferences and of evolving themes. Participants, I discovered, had their own priorities of concern on various aspects of change and I chose to follow their lead. Responses tended to focus around two or three main themes with each faculty member. I found several themes to be common among all participants; however, each theme did not receive the same emphasis from each participant. The themes I present here are further refinements of the patterns that emerged during my field research.

In analyzing the transcripts of the individual dialogic interviews with faculty participants, I identified the following themes, which I will now discuss:

- Concept of Educational Change
- Liberal Arts in the Community College
- Education vs Training
- Student Characteristics
- Faculty Roles & Characteristics
- Educational Administration
- Faculty Needs

Concept of Educational Change

One of the most common reactions I received when first introducing the topic of educational change to participants was a questioning of the meaning of the word *change*. I even noticed a sense of frustration and anger just at the mention of the word: "I have a real reaction to the words *change* and *change agents*. I think people embrace these key words without letting them become deeply rooted with our colleagues. And then they become buzz words that don't have a lot of meaning for us" (Rhonda). "It's

a complex question because there are a lot of slogans and buzz words and so on, and a lot of them are highly ambiguous" (Fraser). But change does happen in education.

Change as a Constant

Along with the irritation at the overuse of the word *change* was the response that the process of change simply happens, continuously, whether mandated or not. Many participants expressed such feelings straight out and added other comments, such as, "Change is the lifeblood of a teacher. Your class is never the same each time you give it" (Ruth). "In terms of change, we're changing all the time; we're adapting our classes, the style of our teaching to fit the students' needs. We have to shape and reshape what we do. We have to add or delete things as we see necessary" (Joanna). "It's not a question of 'Has there been change?' Change is inevitable" (Leo). Moreover, it was clear that change itself was an accepted part of school life: "I don't think people react negatively to change; we're continuously adapting. Small changes are continuously occurring that show a kind of evolution in our work" (Rhonda).

Many of the participants felt there was too much emphasis on the need to make change happen: "We live in a capitalist society which brings about change for change's sake, to keep bringing in capital. We need the ability to recognize what has to be changed and not make change just for the sake of change" (Betty). Such talk was common, with implications that unnecessary change was being asked of faculty a little too often:

> I've been around long enough to have seen similar cycles, and so have others. We've also been around long enough to see the pendulum swing a number of times and we're just lying low and waiting to see what happens. Previous cycles haven't created any significant changes in the way we do our work. If you're an instructor, you're concerned with students learning effectively, and that's what you concentrate on. (Rhonda)

Fuzzy Meanings

After years of seeing change initiatives come and go, many faculty have developed cynicism that changes are made more for the benefit of administration than for the students, with faculty caught in the middle.

> Constant change is a self-indulgence of the administration. A lot of it is completely semantic—like with [the implementation of] learning outcomes. The purpose of change is for government and administrators to say, "Look, we're taking an interest in education." We've had all kinds of massive restructuring and it hasn't changed what we do in class. An awful lot of what passes for change is just window dressing. (Karen)

Others mentioned, cynically, that they had learned to go along with those ideas that passed for change: "We all just hopped in line and adjusted the language on our course outlines. It was just language" (Leo). "Most faculty don't really feel that the changes that are going on are all that significant. Rewriting the objectives [learning outcomes] for a course, for example, is just the same old thing in different words. It doesn't really affect course content" (Ginny). "The college has been reorganizing itself with great regularity, but in terms of how that's affected the day-to-day reality in the classroom; I think it's been fairly negligible" (Chris).

The perception of change activities with new names as vehicles to impress community, government, and business was seen to apply to most initiatives:

> I don't know what *student-centered education* means. It's like saying you believe in freedom and equality— well everybody believes in freedom and equality— until you unpack what is really meant by that. I don't know. Of course I believe in student-centered education. Community colleges have always been student centered. (Chris)

There was general agreement that the community college is by its nature student centered. Faculty had a clear grasp of what that meant as far as their own teaching was concerned, and it meant adapting to student needs: "I think we've changed our teaching methods quite a bit from what we were taught" (Odessa). "To me, student-centered learning reinforces the idea that a student should be doing something actively in class, applying the principles and contributing to his or her own learning" (Ginny). The insult of being told that they weren't being student-centered, as stated in Barr and Tagg's (1995) article in *Change* magazine, "From Teaching to Learning: A New Paradigm for Undergraduate Education," only made faculty angry and caused them to suspect some other meaning was to be read between the lines:

> The resistance over being student-centered is over what it means. I think there's a difference between being learner-centered and being learning-centered. Instructors have always been learning-centered—trying to find ways

> to help our students learn. But learner-centered can imply that the customer is always right. And it's the reference to customer that takes on a different connotation. So these terms have been red flags for the college community. (Rhonda)

Distinctions and clarification over the meaning of the change initiatives that were being promoted was common: "Learner-centered education can be good if the instructors are trying to figure out what educational methods really work for the students, but the kind of learner-centered thinking that is very dubious is the view that what the learners want is what they should get" (Fraser).

Hidden Agendas

Faculty feared that the push to emphasize student-centered education was more than what it was purported to be, that it carried a hidden agenda, which would affect education itself, turning it into a commodity: "Let's figure out what the new agenda really is. It's to change the student into a consumer and I just think that's philosophically flawed. You don't buy your education the way you buy a new pair of Levi's. What it means is now education is consumer based rather than student based" (Chris). Here's another comment that expands the concern:

> But let's just think. If students are consumers—which is how some short-minded administrators view this matter—then what they're purchasing is not wisdom, they're purchasing a degree. So institutional [standards], you know, like achievement on exams or demonstrating the ability to do research or independent critical thinking, all that sort of stuff, becomes irrelevant, because that's no longer the objective (Eric).

The threat of commodification of education provoked irritation in almost every participant. "It's our job to put together programs that are beneficial to the students and to the society. But once you see education as a commodity, it's buyer beware" (George). Faculty revealed an acute awareness that the world is changing, and that institutions are not isolated from the changes occurring in the world. "It's not so much change in the institution as change in the world at large and the fact that any meaningful education has to reflect some understanding. You can't operate in some little ivory tower mentality. That's just not the way it is anymore" (Ruth). "Our curriculum has not changed in 30 years. It's the same program exactly. But the

industry has changed. The music business has changed hugely. People making music using synthesizers and computers was just unheard of 30 years ago. . . I try to stress the practical side, what I think [the students] will need in the world" (Larry).

For this faculty member, the curriculum restricted how much he could adapt his courses to meet current social trends and he felt frustration with his colleagues for not seeing, as he did, the need to make necessary adaptations. The reason, he felt, was that changes would mean job loss for some longstanding faculty, which was a result no one supported. And the fear was borne out by enrollment. "Arts programs are in high demand. . . . Some classes [however], like in the music program and language programs, they aren't always full" (George). Faculty participants who taught in other subject areas didn't mention any perceived threat of job loss.

Some faculty did note, however, the discrepancy in their colleagues' feelings about responding to world change and of the purpose of a community college education:

> A lot of the faculty who came here, and who still come here, are academics who've never had a real job—they've never had rain in their lunch bucket—and they're teaching students who come from a working-class background. I think people in the careers area are much more realistic about what their students are going to go on and become. (Odessa)

One of the reasons given for this feeling among some Liberal Arts faculty was that "there are people who would like to teach at a university. There is, on the part of faculty, not a very unified coherent vision of what a community college is. I mean. They're very divided on that question" (George).

Responsibility to Students

Faculty noted that teaching methods change, philosophical approaches change, and assignments change to reflect society and the environment; however, the core curriculum itself in the Liberal Arts hasn't really changed in the 30 years the college has existed. "I don't think the way we connect conceptually with our students has changed dramatically over time, even though we may be using technology or distance learning now" (Rhonda). "The curriculum, I'd say, has to be adapted slightly to

incorporate or mirror changes in communications generally. But I wouldn't say that the curriculum has really changed" (Ruth).

Instructors were concerned mainly with making the teaching relevant and finding ways to improve what they were doing. "In teaching you have conversations with other instructors, about education, about improving education, about trends, and so from a peer discussion, the awareness is there. It's less this mandate coming from above and more of a looking around and seeing what's being done and using what I see as effective in my own teaching" (Ginny).

Liberal Arts in the Community College

Faculty participants acknowledged the broad-based mandate of the community college and the challenges associated with providing a wide variety of programs:

> As a community college, we're much more closely connected to the labor market, to the community, than the universities. And we have working relationships with the professional associations, such as with the Registered Nurses. [The irony is that] vocational training is expensive and doesn't pay for itself. The UT [university transfer] courses pay for themselves and subsidize other parts of the college because they're very cost effective. Nobody's ever had a problem before with the high demand areas subsidizing the low-demand areas. We've had a commitment to a comprehensive program . . . but that's going to change [with the budget cutbacks]. (George)

At Warren College, "the largest demand is overwhelmingly university transfer; so it has made us a feeder institution with a curriculum that parallels the universities" (Leo).

Uniqueness of the Community College

Warren College has been able to subsidize its vocational and professional training through its high enrollment in Liberal Arts courses. It has also been able to provide special attention to students in the academic divisions: "Colleges tend to be conscientious that students are meeting transfer requirements and criteria in the first two years, probably more so than universities" (Ginny). "Community colleges are more responsive and responsible to students than universities. And there's the open-door policy, which means that we're helping students who wouldn't otherwise get an education because of their GPAs" (George). For new instructors, differences between

community colleges and universities (where they had received their education) required them to make unexpected adjustments in their teaching:

> One of the advantages of teaching in a college over the university is that class sizes are much smaller so you can actually do things that involve a fair amount of discussion. You know, I cut my teeth on classes of 75 and 80 where I got into a lecture mode. Then I came to the college and just sort of continued along in that mode for a couple of years when I realized that I actually had options here [with a smaller class size]. (Chris)

Small classes were often cited as a strength of teaching and learning in a community college: "We're providing the contact and the face-to-face humanistic sort of relationship which is vital, and that's what we should concentrate our strengths on and really build from, rather than just abandon it to compete with the private companies who are trying to suit a niche" (Fraser).

However, the advantages and strengths of such teaching were seen to not be as appreciated or recognized as they should be, in the competitive rush to change education: "We can't put together a program as quickly as the private institutions, because we have a long process of vetting the proposal and the curriculum through the [senate], the board, the government, and it takes a certain amount of time. These are the structures that guarantee quality" (George).

Moreover, the threat of competition was seen to be the impetus behind the creation of more revenue-generating programs that were not accredited or articulated, thereby misrepresenting the college and putting its reputation at jeopardy. "We're vulnerable to the increasing demands. It's happening through the college's expansion of continuing education [CE]. If you look at the program offerings, CE is offering credentials, not credits. And the certificates look like the certificates for credit programs. How are employers going to know the difference?" (George).

The argument for quality and standards was also used to question the wisdom of accepting underprepared students: "Open access is creating a GPA gap, which is not doing any favors to our students. The other debated question is over residency, which puts into question the whole concept of education" (George). One faculty member remarked on the increased pressure it put on her, since she also needed to respond to the university's expectations: "We're interested in the transfer needs of students. Those are the outcomes we look at" (Karen).

Liberal Arts, which make up the greater part of the university-transfer courses, was considered by some to be outside the applied or so-called practical programs of the community college, aiming primarily at preparing students for an academic life:

> We're serious academics. . . .Psychology is not an applied area. If you want to do drug and alcohol counseling, you take some of those little program area courses . . in Child, Family, and Community Studies. We don't have any needs for change at all. We want to just do what we're doing. We still have an unmet need for what we're doing well. Why would we be interested in changing? (Karen)

In most cases, faculty didn't feel there was a problem with the lack of major change in curriculum content: "Our department will never go out of date. The core stays the same and we augment content with the web base" (Leo). The reason seems to be that the Liberal Arts is an area with a set content, meant to prepare students for transfer to a four-year institution; and universities set the agenda for academic programs. Given that learning is now a lifelong affair, even if a student does not immediately go on to university, she or he likely will sometime in the future. If the courses don't meet transfer requirements, no matter how practical they may be, the student may have to take the course again. The concern is to do it right the first time. "Most of the change that concerns us as faculty is change in the curriculum. And the curriculum is university driven in the academic area" (Leo).

However, a university's goal may not be the same as that of a community college: "I've heard it said that the ultimate aim of a university education is to produce other university teachers" (Larry). Several times during interviews, participants questioned where the emphasis should be in Liberal Arts courses, noting that the community college's focus was on student learning, primarily for diplomas and associate degrees:

> [In the beginning] I made the mistake of assuming every one of the students in my classes was intended to be a philosophy major and now I recognize that the vast majority are taking one or two philosophy classes out of interest. Now I worry much more about getting the ideas across than I worry about getting the philosophy exactly right (Chris).

It was clear that all felt that whether or not a student transferred to a four-year institution to complete a degree, Liberal Arts courses held value for the student: "[A Liberal Arts education is about] the ability to view the world in some way, to be analytical about making sense of it, and to communicate, and well, always to question. And there's self-assessment built into that process" (Rhonda). Some examples were given: "Things like philosophy, for instance, teach students the skill of critical thinking, which they're very lacking in" (Ruth). And more than specific skills, the Liberal Arts were seen to contribute to a well-rounded education that prepares students to be good citizens and members of society: "If students in the long run have decent jobs and are good people and contribute to the community, and stay out of jail—if they can do all that stuff, I mean, there's nothing wrong with that" (Eric).

But even beyond those characteristics, a more valuable contribution to society was noted: "There's a real problem with democracy, because most people don't know enough to have a proper opinion. Most people are uninformed, and they just make knee-jerk reactions. It behooves the state to have an educated populace. Democracy doesn't work unless people are educated" (Joanna). Courses in the Liberal Arts were seen to promote more open-mindedness and prepare students to live and adjust to a global world:

> Students need to understand their own culture as well as others. They need to develop the awareness of time periods and history. They don't know much about their own background, and much less of other people's—it's important, even to understand their own neighbors. I mean, how can you interact with a world you don't understand?
>
> The West has a huge influence in the world. When we're dealing externally, we need to learn more about the society we're dealing with. Maybe we could have avoided some of the problems we're in now [war in Afghanistan] if we'd paid more attention to that aspect. (Denis)

The dangers of narrow training for specific skills, as seen to be recommended by government and supported by administrative decisions, were colorfully pointed out:

> Somebody's decided where the students should be going and so that's what's being funded. Business and technology—Ed Tech—it's huge. It's a waste in my opinion. I don't want unscrupulous technocrats running around. Frankly, what a horrible world to live in if students aren't encouraged to think critically,

> if they don't read critically. And we need more and more Liberal Arts courses, not fewer. (Joanna)

Moreover, the gaining of narrow skills was not seen to be a benefit to the student in the long-range: "What will happen out there, once those students with their job-ready skills come out into a world that's changing? By the time they get out of their two-year or four-year diploma, the job's changed and they're not ready for the change" (Joanna).

Another inherent danger of listening only to business needs was that "Business doesn't care about humans. People should come before profit, but they don't. Profit comes first for businesses. And that's why education can't be a business, because we'd forget about people. I fear that we're going to have to change our societal values in order to keep corporations happy" (Joanna). All faculty felt strongly that the values conveyed by a Liberal Arts education needed to be made more visible because there was danger of the basic societal role getting lost in the push to change education. "We need to be speaking out strongly about the value of this kind of education [Liberal Arts] and building stronger links to the community around us to show that" (Rhonda).

Promoting the Liberal Arts also means addressing assumptions and perceptions that such an education is not practical or directly applicable: "The notion or the preconception that the Liberal Arts somehow graduates people who are not employable or not fundamentally worthwhile to society in a genuine utilitarian sense is wrong. There's no evidence to that" (Eric). Faculty also acknowledged that it wouldn't be an easy task. "It's clear that we have to mount a defense of the Liberal Arts to prove to people the value. The unfortunate thing for those of us who teach in the Liberal Arts is that the skills we impart are not countable skills. We know the intrinsic value of our world and so we don't sell it" (Joanna).

These comments reflected the sometimes unspoken but ever-present assumption that education somehow has to be "sold" to the public. And many felt that administrators weren't approaching the dilemma in an appropriate way: "I don't think faculty are feeling that [this marketing approach to education] is impacting their teaching in a significant way. But there's acute awareness that the people who are controlling the budgets are developing a different mindset around students, and certainly people are worried about that" (Rhonda).

Education vs Training

Important in the argument for the benefit of Liberal Arts was the distinction made by faculty members between *education* and *training*. "Education is the process which focuses on intrinsic values . . . and training is the gaining of certain instrumental skills" (Fraser).

Job Readiness

Most faculty made a distinction between education and training and showed frustration at the widespread claims from government that education was best if designed to directly meet specific job requirements. It provoked serious concern:

> The main change that I have noticed has to do with the pressures from the external environment to increasingly marketize the education process, to increasingly move to a training model and less of an education model. . . . Educational goals have to do with human fulfillment, with community building. The privatization of the education system removes the means of expressing the public as a public; and the culture as well. It diminishes from the possibility of there being a culture. (Fraser)

"Very, very few of the students sitting in those classes will actually work in sociology or anthropology. The abilities they learn—to think critically, remove cultural blinkers, write, and express themselves—have value, but it's not job training" (Leo). These distinctions, it was felt, put into question the nature and purpose of education:

> Many of my colleagues, here and at universities too, are deeply concerned that there's a fundamental incompatibility between a utilitarian defense of education and the goal of education as worthy in its own right. You know, throughout the 1960s and 70s there wasn't any need for those sorts of defenses of the Liberal Arts.
>
> What strikes me is how close our period of time is right now to that in the 1950s or just shortly after the Second World War. There was an incredible pressure in America for kind of a utilitarian framework. When you read back in the 50s, business was dominating the debate; research was for applied purposes only, not for its own sake. (Eric)

Sometimes it seemed to faculty participants that reports on what business wants contradict themselves:

> In today's workplace we need people who can do all of those things—do critical thinking and communicate and everything, more than we did before. And it's not just that you take a course on critical thinking; you have to do some critical thinking in an applied kind of way. I teach in organizational behavior and I see reports that say "We don't want trained people, we want a Liberal Arts education. We want that first, with some basic skills, and then we take the students and they will learn how to work in our company." (Susan)

Faculty confirm, especially those who had been teaching for two or three decades, that the value of a liberal education bears out well in the workforce: "Well, I think we do both things [education and training] and I think even the people who want the jobs realize that the Liberal Arts education, the critical thinking and so on, is vital; you need people who are able to think"(Odessa). "You know, when you train in technology, you're always training in what's going to be outdated. I think we still need places for people who are tech-oriented, but also for those who want the broader background for intellectual life questioning—education for being a whole person as well" (Leo).

Inflation of Requirements

One of the fallouts of high demands from business and industry was perceived to be an inflation of requirements. Government and employers were seen to be putting too much emphasis on the gaining of credentials rather than on learning: "What was a Grade 12 requirement is now a university degree requirement—for a job that doesn't really require a degree. But employers have so many people with degrees out there competing, there's an inflation in expectation from the employers" (Leo). "I think what's happening is the bar is being raised. It used to be you had to have Grade 8 and then it was Grade 10 and then it was Grade 12. And now, employers want two years of college. That's become a standard now" (Odessa).

However, this rising demand in qualifications for employment was also seen to impact education itself, especially where quality is concerned: "I think we're going to see erosion of our standards, being forced to compete with the private institutions" (George). "Education is devalued because it's not what it used to be and students are getting credentials for nothing" (Joanna). Another consequence is the impact of students demanding their rights to certification simply because they have paid for the product. "I think students are more assertive now than they used to be about

expecting that time put in means good grades. We hear about instances where students are suing instructors for higher grades and what that implies about expectations of what the instructor is there for" (Rhonda).

Cynically, faculty mentioned that business will get what they ask for. "In the short-term, we probably won't see the result. But in the long-term, the business community is going to see that they're not getting the kind of people they thought they were getting" (George). Faculty would prefer to uphold the standards and resist the pressure of competition, although they're unconvinced that administration agrees with that stance.

Student Characteristics

Not only were corporate and business demands seen to be changing, but so too was the profile of the community college student over the years, and particularly in the Liberal Arts: "They certainly weren't straight out of high school [in those days] like they tend to be now. The average age has dropped in the last decade" (Leo).

Non-Traditional Learners

Age was not the only difference noted by faculty: "The student who's coming here now is not the student that was here 15 years ago. You know, they have jobs, they have families, they have all kinds of different abilities. And often, they're not here as learners first. Learning is in conjunction with their other life" (Joanna). "And there are also the people who have been out of school for a long time, the mothers who have raised their children and are coming for a career of some sort. They tend to not perceive themselves as scholars and thinkers. You have a spread of ages, interests, and abilities, which is a real challenge that you have to learn how to meet" (Ruth). Challenges presented for instructors once these students enrolled, and challenges presented for students, just to get enrolled:

> It's harder for the non-traditional learner to get in these days and get into classes because there's an overload. We turn away large numbers of students trying to get into first-year courses. The older students aren't willing to play the waiting game and take any course just to get registered and then stick around until they can get the courses they want. They don't have that flexibility

> because of work and family schedules. We tried harder in the early days to meet those needs, until we were just deluged with numbers. (Leo)

The frustration of not being able to serve all who want and deserve an education combine with feelings of increased workload due to the rapid expansion of the college, and all that it brings in student diversity:

> We moved from 3,000 students to 7,000 students in 10 years, and it's a whole lot of students who don't have the kind of classroom experiences that lend themselves to fitting in easily. It requires a lot of effort on the part of faculty. We have so many more students with disabilities, including mental disabilities, and we haven't had our staff increased. And with the multicultural aspect, you spend so much more of your time going over student's writing or reading problems. It's a different student body from 10 years ago. (George)

Increased pressures from business for a post-secondary education seem to have resulted in more and more students flocking to community colleges, particularly of those who don't meet entrance requirements to four-year institutions. This influx of students has also brought with it difficulties in language comprehension and expression. Students just aren't seen to handle the level of reading and writing required of them at the post-secondary level: "There's an increasing need for language abilities before entering university-transfer courses. It's difficult to get psychology concepts across when language abilities are poor" (Karen). "Forty percent of the students are ESL background. There's certainly more ethnic diversity and more students with mental-illness difficulties (Odessa). "I think [globalization] does affect me right now in my class. When I taught organizational behavior, I had 40 students—seven Caucasians. [People from Asian countries] are here and they want to know what's going on in this world and how to work in it. But the students who have English as a second language take a fair chunk of my time. It takes a lot of time to help a student who cannot write a paragraph" (Susan).

Underprepared Students

Overall, both native and non-native speakers of English were seen to be deficient in the basic prerequisites of an academic education:

> Students are not coming in as prepared. I know what my preparation was like when I got in to university. I find that the students today—it's terrible. They have less ability. They want us to tell them what's going to be, what they need to think about, tell them how to answer, everything. Their readiness for an academic world and the life of the mind— it's nowhere, they're not ready for it. (Joanna)

According to faculty members with longstanding experience, "We get some really, really good students. But we also get more problem students than the universities" (Leo). That thought was echoed by many, as well as another: "Students who are in universities are quite focused on some professional field, and they have some readiness or ability to pursue things on a purely intellectual approach. Most students in the community college are, I think, kind of misdirected" (Ruth).

One of the perceived difficulties in teaching was the immaturity of the younger students in the Liberal Arts programs. "A significant portion of our students treat this place just like a high school when they get here—and they do too much goofing around. A community college is not just a way of extending public school, or at least it shouldn't be" (Karen). "My knowledge is nothing but anecdotal, but what I see is that a lot of these young people don't have that kind of discipline, self-drive; because a lot of college students here aren't highly motivated" (Leo).

Another concern about preparedness, beyond maturity and language abilities, was the general level of education and awareness: "Quality is disappearing in students. They're 'gappy' and that goes back to the family, school teachers today, and society. There is no depth to their education. Things they should know are missing, and yet they know extraneous, superfluous details. They don't know how to discriminate what's really important from TV and computers. They are glued to what they think is reality" (Betty). Other participants continued with another explanation: "There's so much passivity in this society. Students spend so much time in front of the TV and the computer, being entertained. The only thing moving is their fingers. So why wouldn't they prefer to be passive listeners? Yet so much more learning occurs when they're active" (Ruth). Instructors feel they have their work cut out.

Many participants felt that students' own lack of awareness kept them out of tune with the world they live in: "Students need to understand their own culture as well as others. They need to develop the awareness of time periods and history. They don't

know much about their own background, and much less of other people's. It's important, even to understand their own neighbors" (Denis). General consensus seemed to be that younger students, in particular, really need the experience of education, but that they haven't been well-prepared for college:

> They've been robbed of a lot of diversity of ideas. They haven't really been exposed to it. In class, one of the young people said, you know, we need leadership: we feel our parents have let us down. This isn't buzz word stuff. When they say leadership, they mean some kind of a moral authority, somebody to stand up for them. And they're not getting that from a CD Rom, and they know that. [Somebody has to set an example.] That's precisely what they want because they feel that no one has been there to set examples for them. (Eric)

Another backlash from this perceived lack of direction is that students don't really know what they want. One thing that a community college can provide for them is an introduction to possibilities and some guidance for future choices:

> I've had many students in my classes who came with a career plan. They come in here, and they know what they're going to do and what they're going to study. Their attitude is, "Let's get this English over with, so I can get on to the real learning." And then they discover that this is pretty interesting and they change their minds. That's what Liberal Arts does. It opens their minds. (Joanna)

The wide diversity in the student population and the increasing demands on instructors to respond to students needs and to outside pressures makes their task almost impossible to complete to the level of quality and satisfaction they would like to see. Most feel hard-pressed to meet the increased expectations. The students aren't achieving the scores they need to transfer to a university program: "There's a GPA gap that's beginning to appear. And I think it has to do with the tremendous workload and stress that faculty are suffering, especially with the pressures to over-enroll because of demand and budget. Students are going to pay the price; there's absolutely no doubt about it" (George). Already, some faculty feel that standards are slipping and that students aren't getting the attention they need.

Faculty Roles & Characteristics

For most faculty, their role is clear and straightforward: "My job is to teach people how to learn, that's what I do. I don't think specific teaching to a point is very good for society, whether it's in elementary school, high school or here at the college. I don't subscribe to job-ready skills. The businesses will take care of that no matter what" (Joanna). For instructors, teaching for the whole student comes first.

Widening Student Awareness

Faculty's teaching role takes into consideration the context of society in particular: "We live in a diverse world that requires people to interact and understand each other. The global questions are even more pressing now than they were before. The teacher's role is to widen students' awareness of the world. I think instructors are in the position to provide the historical and disciplinary context that will help students to expand their knowledge of the complexity of society" (Denis).

Faculty see that to fulfill this role adequately, they need personal skills in addition to the required knowledge for lecturing: "You develop as an instructor-come-social worker to some extent. At first I really resisted because I saw myself in that classroom to teach, but now I see myself more in the role of facilitator" (Ruth). The personal touch is the most highly valued: "Students know when you work hard and you get assignments back quickly and when you're putting an effort into things and you're trying. They appreciate that. The affective qualities are far more important here than administrators understand" (Eric). This belief is also a result of the way that instructors perceived their own education, and of what they are passing on to their students. "I think a responsibility of receiving that education is to give something back, so I think there's a service component in there too" (Rhonda).

This need to teach to students' personal needs as well as to the course outline requirements motivates instructors to go beyond what is technically required to fulfill their duties. "We still fight to maintain the standards in our classroom. I mean, I'm still giving term papers, when going over multiple choice exams would make life easier" (George).

Personal dedication seems core to what most instructors do. Their feeling is that students come to a community college for the personal touch:

> I don't think the future is written that it is going to be all web-based or some similar form of learning. There's always going to be a desire for people to come in and have human contact. It's very hard to have discipline to learn the other way, you know. The completion rate, I'm told, for things like correspondence courses is actually pretty low. It's hard to keep that drive when you're isolated. (Leo)

More to the point: "What's the need for distance education? I have a lot of students who need a lot of support and want to have an instructor who's face to face with them" (Ruth).

Dealing with Technology

Technology, per se, is not completely discounted as an important part of education. Instructors are aware that it is important, not only for their students, but also for their own preparation and delivery of classes. "Computers are a good thing. I remember banging out my course materials on the electric typewriter. Now, of course, computers make it easier. And students do their assignments on the computer instead of handwritten" (Ruth). However, technology also requires certain adaptations on the part of instructors, of which not all seem to be aware, especially at exam time: "A lot of students do all their writing with a computer. You get them in a classroom, and you're asking them to use a pen in their hand, and they have a hard time—it's anachronistic to them" (Ruth).

The adaptation to changing technology, increased student needs, and growing demands from administration and business is having its toll on faculty:

> The budget cuts are having profound changes—especially on workload and productivity. Funding is down, demands are up (e.g., duty to accommodate), and staffing is less, especially in counseling, [which ironically needs more staffing]. The emphasis on productivity means that you're under the gun to take in more students in your classroom. That's a pretty good heft in your workload. And I think there's been a failure to appreciate what it means to be an open-door institution, with the increased diversity of students. (George)

Technology itself was considered a time-eater: "The workload, you would think, would get better with computers. But we have endless problems with computers and e-mail, access codes, and so on—finding technology that actually works. The constraint of technology is that if you have a computer on your desk, you become your own secretary" (Odessa). "I don't know how many e-mails I have stacked up that I don't even bother looking at . . . with all the voicemail too" (Ruth). "The workload, you would think, would get better with computers. But we have endless problems with computers and e-mail, access codes, and so on—finding technology that actually works.

Finding Time

One of the biggest problems for faculty is finding time to do it all: "Everything takes time and energy and then just the pressure of meeting with students. They do come in for consultations, not like at the other college I was teaching in. Here it's the diversity of the student body, with different concerns and challenges. It has almost become an expectation from the students that the teacher should always be there when needed" (Ginny). Faculty participants all noted their willingness to take on departmental roles and obligations: "I think everybody accepts that we should be on committees, you know, to help the college move and run and everything. But I think it's a lot harder to get people to do that now" (Susan).

One of the biggest issues, mentioned by virtually everyone, was overcommitment: "All I know is there's never enough time for instruction here and there's never enough time for student success. We're just so busy and so stressed out about what we're doing. I see that as the major change. English as a department used to be far more cohesive than it is. And having multi-campuses, having the master schedule that we've got, it's just not good for collegiality (Joanna).

Over and over again, faculty participants mentioned the feeling of being overwhelmed and just not able to do everything: "There is that perception that more is wanted of us but that doesn't mean that where I do more is related to my teaching. Teaching is so psychically and physically demanding that when you're teaching you don't want to have your energy and your time deflected for things that these managers

are supposed to be doing" (Ruth). Sometimes, comments bordered on implying that faculty felt they were being used:

> The administration has been dreaming up new employability programs that they can market to the government and get rewards for themselves as administrators; and yet, we were the ones who by the sweat of our brow, taking in more students, got the college the reward of having more sections that allows them this addition. (Odessa)

The feeling of lack of recognition and support from higher administration was echoed in a variety of ways. "We worked quite hard to get the Women Studies program going. There was no money for it; there were no time releases, nothing. I guess we were lucky because we had one of the deans who was on side and wanted to get it going, so we just went ahead and did it anyway" (Susan).

Not only was it felt that the efforts being made were not recognized, but that there was no recognition or allowance for the other roles of a community college instructor:

> The problem with college teaching is that one day you're standing in front of the class thinking, "What am I doing here? I haven't done anything since grad school in my field." You cease being an anthropologist and become merely a teacher of anthropology. Writing and research comes at a huge cost, because it's carved out of weekends, summer holidays and "spare" time. It's at a very considerable personal cost, I think. (Leo)

Much has changed since the early days of the community college, and several participants felt that the "graying" of the faculty might be an impacting factor:

> The founding days were exciting and dynamic times. There was a strong sense of being pioneers. There was a, you know, buzz; everyone working hard and getting established "on the ground floor" as the cliché goes. . . . In the old days it was chaotic, but it was energizing. I don't know how much of the [low-energy] feeling around here now to attribute to change in the institution and how much to the aging process. We used to think we could bring about change. We used to think we could make it happen. (Leo)

Many of the faculty who had taught since the 1970s reflected the feelings and hopes of those times—of their mission "to create a better world"—and still felt those values were part of the community college tradition. However, many also expressed the feelings of being squeezed for time, and of being "burned out."

Educational Administration

Faculty participants, in their description of their role and expectations, also had strong opinions on the role of administrators. Many sensed that the impact of change initiatives introduced by administrators was negligible as far as benefit, but far-reaching in the scope of bringing on extra work, and they expressed their reluctance at accepting so much more work that was not seen to be for any real benefit:

> Since the reorganization of the college, there seems to be a thrust to getting more out of you. You know there's always more work coming along. The administration just seems to come up with these projects at the 11th hour and some unrealistic timeframe which is in the middle of the semester.
>
> You have to be kind of cagey around what you're willing to take on, because we've all had the experience of putting a lot of work into things that have come to nothing. You just get jaded about getting launched on some other new and exciting thing that is just going to be a waste of time. (Ruth)

Making Change without Purpose

For change efforts to be meaningful and motivational, they had to be seen as having a purpose. Indeed, pleasing the employer seemed to be the only reason given to faculty for making mandated changes, and many wondered about the relevance of that purpose:

> I think the people in our college associated as change agents haven't worked with the new initiatives with as much communication as we probably would have liked, and over a long-enough period across the college, to be able to embed and connect the ideas among faculty and staff. As a result, people react very strongly to these words because change without a purpose, without a reason, is meaningless. Why would we change? It's just busy work. (Rhonda)

After experiencing three decades of education initiatives and new projects, faculty are somewhat cynical when yet another new idea is introduced: "I think there's an awful lot of political flimflam that goes on and that people really haven't thought of the good of the majority of the students in the long run when making these decisions about educational planning" (Odessa). Change that faculty would support wholeheartedly was expressed as "making change that benefits the student" (Larry).

However, in general, faculty didn't appear to be trusting or confident of the reasons behind many of the changes:

> Community colleges are not capable of running as businesses. Academe is not business-oriented. All too easily, the administration gets attracted to the brightest beacon, which may not be the best. And there is no one with real business smarts, who is in contact with outside business change, to provide the leadership needed to bring about intelligent change.
>
> Where is the money going? We don't know. The VPs go off to conferences and we don't see the returns for the college and students. . . . Administration has the time to think up changes and we have time only to get teaching and correcting done. They create things for others to do. (Betty)

Misunderstanding What Faculty Do

One of the sore spots among faculty is that administrators don't seem to understand what instructors really do in the classroom, what the constraints are in just performing their primary task of teaching: "Sometimes administrators show a lack of understanding in what we're really about" (Karen). This remark was made by several; sometimes in colorful ways: "Leaders are not skilled in the areas that I'm teaching and that, I think is a problem. They don't have empathy or understanding. If only they knew what we were doing. You know, Forgive them God, for they know not what they do" (Joanna). This theme came back many times:

> [If we're talking about the process of bringing changes to our work on a personal level in the college] I think there's been a problem with people with good intent not having enough of an understanding of people's daily working lives to know how to connect an idea to them and make it relevant. And there's the insensitivity of lack of knowledge about what we actually do in a classroom. (Rhonda)

Specific examples of this perceived lack of understanding were also given: "We had this portfolio project here that was set up to teach teachers. But the teachers who were leading it were from the trades. They were not academic professionals. And so what they were teaching had nothing to do with us, almost no applicability" (Joanna).

Another perceived downfall of administration was the lack of appropriate support to carry out the changes that were to be implemented:

> One of the big things right now is the distance-learning and technology bandwagon. Yet we just don't have the technical support in the institution to do that in a very practical way. [For example,] it's a Wednesday night, early in the term, and the whole system's down because computing is doing maintenance. Computing should not be doing maintenance at prime time for teaching at the beginning of the semester.
>
> These people who don't have anything directly to do with students have really nice offices with a view and they have computers and printers that work and they go home at 4:30. And I'm still there, wandering the halls, looking for a printer that works. I'm going between campuses and hauling and freighting all this equipment and . . . it starts to make you very angry. (Odessa)

Ignoring Faculty's Voice

Faculty felt that although administrators claimed to listen to faculty needs and wanted faculty to have input, they didn't provide adequately for the possibility:

> We're asked to be involved with change. My criticism of this college, however, is that it has a top-down system. Paper floats down from the administration with stuff we're supposed to implement, and occasionally we're supposed to give feedback. But the deadlines here are so short there's no time for contemplation. Everything is hurry up and rush to the finish. (Joanna)

Faculty who do respond and provide the input as requested are then disappointed to find that their work has been for nought:

> They wanted to redo the scheduling, so I made a schedule suggestion. They wanted suggestions with respect to ways to curtail finances, we made those. They wanted suggestions on what they could do in college reorganization. We made those on every single instance. The advice has simply been ignored. So a lot of us are to the point now where we just don't bother. The [new] president has a real uphill slog right now, trying to persuade most of the people that the administration actually cares when they ask us. (Chris)

Jaded by the constant demands for input that seemed to be ignored, faculty had suspicions about why administrators were asking for their opinion in the first place. "They don't really want to listen to what we have to say, even though we've made the effort asked of us. They don't make an honest directed effort to really make it work. Our comments are ignored and put in the back of reports" (Odessa). "The institutional culture in this place is such that they consult in enormous amounts for a decision they've already made for all intents and purposes. The administration has no

credibility. They've asked us for input so many times and we've been ignored so many times, that most of just don't bother anymore" (Chris).

More credibility was seen to be given by administration to outside consultants than to the people who were going to be left to deal with the recommended changes: "When [a former president] was here, he tried to get some things going and some change in the college, but he hired the wrong people—outside consultants. It was too bad, you know, because I was all for it, but the [consultants] who came were too slick. Nobody liked them . . . The way they restructured the whole college was not well supported by faculty. [Administration] asked us quite often for input, and it went nowhere" (Susan). Some faculty also felt that administrators were making decisions that could be better made by faculty and those concerned: "The different roles were defined recently by our senior administration, but they look very functional and make the deans appear to operate as overseers. We need to define the roles better" (Betty).

Frustration was widely expressed over the lack of recognition and inability to do much outside of narrowly defined roles. Many faculty wanted to make a difference, felt constrained in their position as faculty, yet didn't see many options open to them: "There's no recognition of merit, of outside work . . . research . . . publication. All you have to do is adequately perform your job and you will move through the sequence to the top of the pay scale. If you want more, you have to go into administration. So there isn't that possibility of advance mentoring or recognition of career achievement" (Leo).

The perceptions expressed regarding administration, although specific at times to certain examples and issues, reflected a general feeling that "Management here is as good as you're going to get in the system" (George). But the other impression they held was that "with faculty and administration, it seems like it's an us-and-them kind of situation" (Ruth).

Faculty Needs

Faculty participants recognized that administration has a huge task to accomplish, with the complexity of running a community college as well as responding to the needs of a range of constituencies—faculty, staff, students, and government. But they

also had clear ideas of ways administrators could work with faculty to manage educational change. One way suggested was for administrators to take care of most of the administrative details, or at least to determine what administrative duties were appropriate for faculty: "I realize this is a huge business to operate—the logistics of getting the students in here and registered and assessed and all that. That's what you need an administration to do. Teaching takes up so much time and we have to stay focused. All the extra little administrative tasks we're asked to do just take up valuable time and energy" (Ruth).

Faculty Involvement Early On

One of the most important ways to ease the load and to improve morale, suggested participants, is to ask for faculty input while there's still time to talk and before decisions are already made: "Policies are brought forth too rapidly so that we don't have time to respond. It gives us no chance to consider long-range consequences. Change can be dangerous when it's not talked about sufficiently. Faculty end up shifting gears to fix the problems" (Betty). "We find that increasingly, programming [educational planning] is being driven by demand rather than by what faculty consider to be appropriate and comprehensive planning" (George). "Faculty need to be involved right from the beginning so it's not seen as a secret thing coming out of [senior administration], with people secretly appointed to carry out instruction. I think just making the effort to have visible openness around initiatives is extremely important" (Rhonda).

Participants couldn't understand why administrators didn't make better use of the talent pool they had in faculty: "It's not like they're working with uneducated people, you know. We aren't just going to all follow the leader and ascribe to the leaders' views. It's not going to happen" (Susan). "We bring our experience to the table. We bring our questions, we bring our empathy, and we bring our sympathy. We get jobs done" (Joanna).

Communication & Awareness

Even when administrators can't implement faculty suggestions or address all their concerns, faculty like to be kept up to date with what's happening around the college:

> [With a former administrator] we all went to department meetings. We would all be there. We were listened to, we were asked opinions. We felt that when we said something it that was taken to the next meeting. And she would come back and say "I brought up what you said and this is how it went." She was very good about that; she would pursue things and everything. And so people came; we wanted the information that she had. (Susan)

Open communication was also seen to help prepare faculty for changes to come, and also aid in faculty acceptance. Overall, communication makes for better working relationships:

> There can't be any making up people's minds for them. They could start initially by building awareness, getting in speakers to present their perspectives on these initiatives and no making up of people's minds for them. It's much better done early on, rather than as a band-aid, repair kit.
>
> People are unhappy with changes when they're seen to be imposed without connection, without relevance or context, when they're seen as change for change's sake, which is just busy work.
>
> If these kinds of processes take place without faculty being involved, then there can be a really big gap between the people put into those positions and the people they're supposed to be working with. (Rhonda)

A principal reason for involving faculty and listening to them is for administrators to be aware of the day-to-day reality of an instructor's life:

> I just want [administrators] to know what's happening in my classrooms. I would like them to understand the goals, the methods, the daily grind of it all, because I think they're working with a misconception about what we're doing here. And they're being advised by people in business or marketing, areas that do not know what I'm doing. Ask them about essay marking and the time I spend down here. So we have resentment; hell, absolute resentment and outrage. . . . And that's why faculty development and initiatives should come from faculty for faculty. (Joanna)

When change involves curriculum, teaching, and faculty development, faculty feel very much that it is primarily a faculty concern and responsibility:

> If the directive comes out of senior administration directly, it can be seen as very top down and heavy handed. When it comes as an initiative from the professional development office, it's seen more as a grassroots operation, connected to college administration, but not run by it. It's seen in a very different light.
>
> It's all in how it's presented and in credibility. If we're told there's a new thing out there and a couple of people are going to bring it to you and tell you how to do it, then you immediately have a [negative] reaction. (Rhonda)

Because of the impression of mixed motives on the part of administration, most initiatives are regarded with skepticism: "You know, if a senior administrator says, 'We think you guys should have these sessions,' we mistrust the reasons for having them. Whereas if it would come from a faculty member to faculty, it would be a lateral movement for the betterment of morale, for student success, for innovation, the changes we really care about" (Joanna). This perspective was taken by several faculty members, with memories of past initiatives serving as examples: "Often the presentation has been, unfortunately, confrontational. An administrator, wanting to be involved, has chosen to promote certain initiatives and done so in a bit of a clumsy way. That is, not having a direct connection to faculty and not being sensitive to how to present it to people" (Rhonda). Indeed, sensitivity is a primary concern:

> What we need are supportive administrators—individuals who can actually make our life better instead of worse. But as with everything, there's consultation with no follow-up. We're ignored, and so we're jaded, cynical, and tired. We're willing, but overloaded. Look at our environmental culture. There's classroom overload, work overload, stress. And now's there's government restraints. (Chris)

Another form of support that was suggested was help with instructors' concerns about meeting student needs: "Universities have greater pressures for entrance requirements. I think we need some kind of entrance requirement that would give students a bit more commitment to achieve when they come here" (Karen).

Time for Collegiality

Faculty have many concerns, and when they get the chance to talk together, they find that they share much in common. Most of the time, they feel isolated and unaware of how others are coping. Collegiality is sorely missed: "I think what faculty

need is the chance to talk with colleagues about those kinds of initiatives. What's really important to us is helping our students to learn. We need the gift of time, and a reason to be together to talk about something. Bouncing ideas off one another is a good thing" (Rhonda). Time was mentioned consistently as a major concern. "Faculty need time to talk about pedagogy. I'm getting this from my department. They want to talk pedagogy and they want to talk it across the disciplines. Not just in English, but everywhere. But there's no bloody time to meet" (Joanna).

Where priorities of duties are concerned, faculty felt collegiality was more important than bureaucratic paperwork:

> I'd rather spend more time with my colleagues. We don't spend enough time as a group talking about our curriculum and how it should be changing and talking about our assignments and sharing our approaches. We don't even have a chance to do that. [One thing about these change initiatives] is that the conversations about them were great. People did come to a clearer understanding of what others were doing, that there was kind of a common stream, and how you could be more on board with student needs by voicing the underlying assumptions. (Ruth)

Some faculty noted that sharing views often happened at faculty meetings, whenever there was a little time left over from pressing business: "A lot of times, when the necessary work is done and we're all together and we get to talk about something, everyone actually becomes interested and excited about the things they're talking about because they're sharing their own point of view and hearing others. Bringing people together for discussions is the way to go. How to get them there is difficult" (Ginny). Collegiality tends to happen in informal get-togethers.

Time was given as a constraint, but so was space: "Faculty have said for a long time we need spaces where people can go, and [administration has] made minimal efforts to do anything about that. If faculty were listened to it could make a big difference. It might not in the end change very much of what you do in your classroom, but it could make for a much more positive environment for coming to work" (Chris).

Faculty fear they are losing what voice they had in decisions concerning education, and that their needs and values are seldom taken into consideration. "People in the leadership positions in the college, I think, have such great sway. You know, they push

their way, and that's one person, and yet that person's vision can be made the vision for everyone" (Susan). Participants saw knee-jerk reactions as potentially damaging, with far-reaching effects: "Rather than just saying it all depends on the bottom line, we need to look at the long-term effects. Maybe in the long run some changes will balance the books, but they may also destroy long-term benefits" (Denis). Mistrust of administrative motives was evident: "Of course we feel we need to keep faculty control, otherwise, we'll soon be sacrificing quality for mass production" (George).

Effective Leadership

Administrators are key people in making things happen. "[Visible] changes occur when administration gets involved, because only they have the power [and authority] to make decisions" (Larry). Sadly, however, faculty feel that the changes they ask for don't seem to come about for this very reason: "Senior administrators could assist initiatives through time release and money. Administration, however, does the opposite and tries to stop change that doesn't come from their office" (Betty). On the other hand, faculty recognize the need for guidance on changes that may be coming down the pipeline as well as the reasons for them: "It sometimes requires someone else to tell you, when you're wrapped up in your own little world, teaching the same way for 20 or 30 years, that the world is changing and your students are probably going to need something a little different" (Larry). These statements illustrate one of the main desires on the part of faculty: "We need leadership. Students need leadership. It's role-modeling and setting an example. It's giving guidance and direction" (Eric). Leadership was seen as a defining role for administration.

Summary

This chapter presented the findings of Phase II of the research study by providing a thematic analysis of data collected through dialogic interviews with 16 faculty participants. Responses were organized and discussed according to recurring and interdependent themes that emerged during the interviews.

Faculty felt that the word *change* was, in general, being thrown about as a buzzword, which no longer held much real meaning; however, change itself is

inevitable and faculty adapt to it every day. Participants noted several aspects to educational change, including the devaluing of the Liberal Arts as a fundamental part of education, the seeming narrow-minded demands of business, the widening diversity of student abilities and expectations, the increasing workload and demands on faculty, and the perceived lack of support and attention on the part of administration. Faculty participants differentiated between *education*, which provides a foundation of broad abilities and values, and *training*, which provides a narrow set of skills that are quickly outdated. They are concerned that education is being sacrificed in favor of training. Students, they feel, need a wider view of the world and a better understanding of today's global society, which is best provided by the Liberal Arts. Faculty are concerned that in the trend to marketize and commercialize community college services, quality and academic standards are being ignored, with the emphasis being put on training—to serve corporate needs rather than those of students. Participants perceived that administrators don't seem to understand faculty's values and worldview, and are not aware of what faculty actually do in the classroom and outside.

Participants had several suggestions for ways that could make their work responsibilities easier to bear in the face of change while still addressing student needs, which remain at the heart of the community college mission. These include better scheduling to permit common times for meeting collegially, more support from administration by way of time release, special funding, technical and computer help when needed, and recognition and validation of their work. Faculty would like input into the organizational decisions that affect them and more discussion around long-term educational planning. Most of all, they feel that leadership requires a focus on the common good of the institution.

A summary of participant perspectives for each of the emerging themes is presented in Table 5, next page. The column on the left-hand side identifies the themes; the column on the right-hand side summarizes the overall faculty perspective of each theme. In Chapter 6, I present an analysis of the themes that emerged during Phase III of the data collection, the group dialogue session.

Table 5. Overview of dialogic interview themes and participant perspectives

Theme	Principal Perspectives
Concept of Educational Change	Change as a buzzword that doesn't have much meaning. Change is constant; instructors adapt incrementally. Mandated changes have fuzzy definitions and hidden agendas. Change should be for student benefit; preferably no job loss.
Liberal Arts in the Community College	Liberal Arts are core to academic programs, which prepare students for transfer to four-year institutions. Liberal Arts enable broad-based abilities and skills for life, work, and citizenship. Liberal Arts courses are inexpensive, and help to subsidize the more expensive professional and vocational programs. Community colleges have smaller classes and provide more one-on-one attention to students' needs than universities
Education vs Training	Business and government are supporting job-skills training. Training targets narrow skills which are quickly outdated. Faculty fear that education, which instills broader abilities and values for personal growth and lifelong learning, will be ignored because it is a harder sell. Increased competition and demands in the job market are resulting in inflation of requirements.
Student Characteristics	Liberal Arts students are younger and more diverse in age, backgrounds, and abilities than 10-15 years ago. They tend to be unprepared for community college, with inadequate language skills, less awareness of the world around them, and little understanding of critical thinking and analysis.
Faculty Roles & Characteristics	Faculty role is to widen students' awareness of the world, develop critical thinking skills, and prepare them for lifelong learning. Faculty must have a good understanding of technology for personal and professional use, and to facilitate students' abilities with technology. Faculty struggle to find time to meet with students and colleagues, and deal with an ever-increasing workload.
Educational Administration	Administrators seem to keep faculty busy with unnecessary and purposeless change. Their interventions are seen as interference, partly because they don't seem to understand what faculty actually do, and partly because they seem to ignore what faculty are telling them.
Faculty Needs	Faculty want to be involved in the early stages of change initiatives and would like open communication and awareness building of proposed changes. They need time and space for collegial discussion, sharing, and planning, and want to be heard and respected by administrators. They expect good leadership.

CHAPTER 6: GROUP DIALOGUE THEMES

Understanding happens between people; it can't be attributed to one individual or the other (Rogoff, 1990, p. 67).

This chapter continues the data analysis begun in Phase II, the dialogic interviews, and moves to Phase III, the group dialogue session, to take a deeper look with a further refinement of the emerging themes. Because the data collected in this phase of the research reflected a group process, where participants themselves expanded on themes that had already been identified during the dialogic interviews, I am presenting this thematic analysis separately from that of Chapter 5. The themes identified here have resulted from clarification and follow-up to Phase II, and are therefore similar, but not identical. As in Chapter 5, this chapter addresses the last two questions of the research study:

3. What are faculty's perceptions of change and of its effects?
    a. What have been the participants' experiences with change?
    b. What are their issues, concerns and insights?
4. What do faculty want?
    a. What change is relevant or important to faculty? Why?
    b. What do faculty feel is needed to introduce, implement, or maintain change in education?
    c. How best can faculty's needs regarding change be addressed?

The focus in this chapter is on the perspectives expressed by faculty during a group dialogue, where participants attempted to come to a group understanding of issues surrounding the phenomenon of educational change. Once again, as in the last chapter, the findings are presented and discussed to reveal what Van Manen (1990) calls an *intersubjective* understanding of the lived experience. This kind of understanding requires "the other [including the reader] in order to develop a dialogic relation with the phenomenon, and thus validate the phenomenon as described" (p. 11). In Phase II, research was limited to one-on-one with the researcher. In Phase III, I had the

opportunity to join in with a group of faculty participants to explore a collaborative understanding of change. "Rationality expresses a faith that we can share this world, that we can make things understandable to each other, that experience can be made intelligible" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 16). However, since this study attempted only one group session, the dialogue process represented here can be only a snapshot, or beginning, of a shared experience. "A human science perspective also assumes that lived human experience is always more complex than the result of any singular description" (p.16).

After the initial dialogic interviews, I sent out a letter of invitation to a group dialogue session (appendix D), which also included a summary of two recent research projects that had been mentioned by several participants and seemed to be relevant to the emerging themes. Six of the original participants responded (Eric, Odessa, Larry, Joanna, Susan, and Denis) and agreed to join with me in a group dialogue of approximately two hours to share their feelings and perceptions around the educational change they had experienced. Although I had met individually with each of them and discussed the topic of change individually, this meeting was the first opportunity for all to meet in a research context and talk about change together. Until this point no one knew for sure who had been involved in my research, since I had taken care to maintain confidentiality. As a result, we spent the first 15 minutes introducing ourselves. I had prepared a short agenda (Appendix E) to briefly outline the research and findings so far, and to provide a list of ideas and questions that might be considered for discussion.

The dialogue began with the ideas listed on the draft agenda, then soon took on a life of its own. Some of the participants' thoughts and perspectives had been heard by me before, but not by everyone else. We found that in conversing as a group, we shared a similar viewpoint on most aspects of change. The conversation centered on themes similar to the ones that had emerged in individual sessions: however, comments tended to be more action-oriented than in the individual sessions, with suggestions for improvement as the group energy began to grow. I did not tape-record the session—because of technical difficulties and because the commotion may have disrupted the spontaneity of responses. Instead, I took notes and later sent out a summary of the findings and comments to the participants for verification.

Discussion was spontaneous and energetic, occasionally with several people speaking at the same time, making additions and corrections and adding comments. I was an active contributor as well as note-taker, with barely enough time to get everything in writing. For this reason, the findings are presented here as a common voice, with no attributions to any specific participant, and they are written in the spirit of the dialogue that ensued. All participants vetted the comments and content of the material presented here, agreeing on the organization and intent and adding comments and additions, although I have since edited for format and presentation in this report.

Dialogue flowed from the concerns and issues identified in the individual interviews and contributed to a further refining of those themes, with the addition of a more specific theme, Educational Leadership, as follows:

- Educational Change
- Community College Education
- Student Characteristics
- Faculty Roles and Characteristics
- Educational Administration
- Faculty Needs
- Educational Leadership

EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

Participants concurred that change comprises different aspects: Some is educational, focusing on curriculum and pedagogy, while some is more organizational, concerning the operating structures of the college. Most change is naturally occurring and comes on incrementally. "Change happens daily, not just every five years or when mandated. We're resentful about what gets implied by change articles and directives. Good teachers change what they do all the time. It's almost subversive. We change as the needs come." Talked-about, visible change is that which is mandated by administration and government. But all change affects faculty in some way, whether it targets teaching and learning or whether it's just busywork. Most change has resulted in increased workloads.

Our discussion touched on past change initiatives that affected us, or didn't—despite all the publicity—and those that we think are imminent. In the past, we have experienced administration's "knee-jerk reactions" to embrace every coming trend. We've handled those, usually by biding our time. But what we consider to be real change is much deeper than simple change initiatives. And the one change on the horizon that we need to prepare for is the move to privatization, which may affect us profoundly, because education will be seen more and more to be a business. Questions we are now asking include: What will happen to quality? What will happen to education itself—and more specifically, to Liberal Arts, or a liberal education? What are the changes we need to pay attention to and invest our precious time in?

Globalization is an emerging trend, and we can already see the effects of internationalization, marketization, and communication technology. In addition, there are now budget cuts and privatization looming over us. Although technology is having a major influence in bringing about globalization, it should be seen as the driver behind change, not the solution. "Liberal Arts provide the tool, or the process, for working with technology. Students are telling us that they don't want a talking head, but they still want you and me as people—our presence."

The proof of this need is that although we offer on-line courses, the enrolment and completion rates are still not very high. Students are sending us the message that there has to be a balance of high-tech and high touch. We need to exercise caution in the adoption of learning technologies, with an eye to the long-term effects and costs before we proceed. Simply buying more equipment or advertising technology courses doesn't take into account the complexity of the issues.

Community College Education

It's a truism to say that the mission and roles of a community college change as society changes to reflect its needs and aspirations. With these changes, however, comes the redefining of education, especially now in the 21st century with the multiple effects of globalization. These will have repercussions on our mission and services. We feel there is a need to look to the long term in planning what services to provide and what areas to emphasize and develop. While a quick response may be desirable, we shouldn't jump on short-term fixes that may cause greater problems later on. Our

community (which includes the government and society at large) entrusts us, as a public institution, to uphold standards of quality. We are mindful of these responsibilities—and quality is our main concern.

We're a community college and we need to think about what that circumscribes. What is our product exactly? So far we have assumed that it is learning. Some faculty feel we should be doing more research; but that isn't the opinion of everyone, and the non-consensus divides us. We also need to remember that the community we serve includes business. But businesses want a lot from us, and they like calling the tune. What does business do in return to show us they're grateful for preparing students the way they ask us to? They should be contributing more to education. For example, there could be an education tax on businesses just as there is on homeownership.

Different ideas and definitions of education abound. "It's okay to theorize, but we need to apply the philosophy in consideration of what education means to everyday life and work outside of academe. Some people here (including faculty) haven't done any real work in the real world." Performance-based teaching, such as in Music, is an area that's different from what the rest of us do, and carries a heavy load. "We don't even know what other instructors do." We need to be more informed.

"The media is killing us by overselling technology and neglecting the importance and influence of the Liberal Arts on people's lives and livelihoods." It appears that education is moving away from serving the whole person. However, medicine and dentistry are now calling for students that can do other things beside academics, because they want well-rounded entrants. Business wants students who have the basics in psychology, sociology, and so on; because they say they can train them to the specifics on the job. Even the bio-tech industry is saying to candidates: What have you done outside of science? Can you work in your community?

It simply doesn't make sense to model a liberal education after a job-skills oriented program, which is so unlike what we do in Liberal Arts. "You'd think that business doesn't want students thinking about things—just buying. We shouldn't be serving the economy; the economy should be serving us." "Business has it all backwards, and we'd like to address that misconception."

Student Characteristics

Students should have a say in what kind of education they need. "But let's remember; they're students. They're in college because they don't really know exactly what they need." They do know that they have goals and they trust faculty, government, and college administrators to help them not only to attain, but to identify their goals to be able to live a meaningful life. Faculty are in closest contact with students and have had the most experience in helping students through this process.

"We don't just want students to get a degree. The goal is for them to go on and make their life. The goal is somewhere else." Students benefit from two years of a Liberal Arts experience. It takes them two years to find themselves, and they need diversity while they're here—not a narrow training. Otherwise they're not exposed to the larger picture. Most of us want to spend the time needed to get our specialty across, but we're also thinking that there's a bigger picture.

Networking is an important skill these days, and it can start at the community college. Students can start developing the skill while they're in school. A learning community model is also possible: It's an opportunity to stop the narrow specialization focus that doesn't benefit a student who leaves the college unable to do anything outside his or her own narrow field. "College is about learning how to live a better life. So maybe we should force students to try out different areas and trigger more parts of the brain."

Money is important for young people. But they still all come back to us and say they were glad to take our course even if it was the only one they could get into and not their first choice. More and more, students are saying, "Just give us the basics." "Where did this come from? If they want the basics, they can be taught to look for what they want through research, learning how to cut through the chaff." They need help in establishing criteria for accuracy and biases, which is what we can provide, but it's a skill that takes time and practice. Just getting the information isn't enough. Anyone can access information these days because it's so readily available through the internet and various communication technologies.

"We don't want students just blithely accepting everything that comes into their lives; sometimes it's as if they turn off their brains." We're the "cod liver oil" [Liberal Arts] that students need to take. "We need to turn their brains on."

"Students are not as uncritical as you may think; they're naturally curious and they're experimenting. They don't usually realize how valuable the courses are until well after they've taken them." We still have the responsibility of providing them with the opportunity. Unfortunately, students are having to learn how to do the sorting out more or less on their own. "Students need mentoring, yes, but who has the time? How many more directions can faculty go at the same time?"

Faculty Roles & Characteristics

The people who are most responsible for the primary work—education— of the college are faculty. But faculty are having less to say about what that education is and should be. Instead we're being told what is important by business, government officials, and administration—those who seem to us ill informed and ill advised themselves. When decisions are made, we feel that faculty are rarely consulted about important matters. When we are, our responses and suggestions are virtually ignored.

"We're not part of the decision-making process. The decisions are presented to us and we're left to deal with them." The perception is that management is top-down. Faculty are therefore cynical. Why fill out questionnaires if nothing is done with the answers? "We don't get any signs that the responses are even read or understood. We get dragged down by the consequences of decisions others are making. And we're concerned that our courses are going to be watered down to meet consumer demand."

Faculty are resisting ways of doing things because there is no cohesive plan for introducing change. Things seem to be done without rhyme or reason. "We're kept in the dark about the reasons for the change—thus the cynicism and doubt that any reasons exist." We faculty do so much charity work "for the good of the college." "What about doing it for the good of the faculty and the students? What is the return on our time and energy investment?"

Faculty do care. We are willing to engage in the exchange of ideas. We love what we do and we're connected to society. We're interested in giving back. However, at the

college, we're suspicious of the motives of management. We've lost confidence that anyone's listening. After years of trying to make a difference, many of us have just pulled back and got on with our own courses and nothing more.

However, there is an aspect we need to address concerning faculty flexibility in implementing change. Internal resistance is a serious problem facing the college at the moment. "Faculty are too top-heavy in age. We need more young people. The attitude of senior faculty is dragging many of us down." The students are changing. "The students have different ways of operating and responding than we do, and we should be listening to them more."

Educational Administration

Administrators are responsible for the overall organization, the physical buildings, the staffing, the budgeting, money management, and ultimately, the educational programming and delivery of courses. "They should rely on experts to help them make important decisions for areas in which they don't have particular expertise." In matters of curriculum (and anything that ultimately affects curriculum), they have experts readily on hand—faculty—and we feel they need to be using this expertise more widely and wisely. Faculty are educated, intelligent people and can be relied on and trusted to a greater extent than is happening.

There's a widespread feeling that management has done a great deal of misreading of the faculty and therefore garners little trust and respect. "We sense a misrepresentation of the college because of administrators' visions that don't seem to match ours, and neglect the educational nature of what we do." Our perception is that there hasn't been enough thought put into academic planning at this college. For example, we could develop two-year Associate Arts degrees around various themes. "Universities are posing a problem right now, with the insistence of block transfer: They want students to finish community college first, yet on a whim, they change their mind about their requirements for the first two years and we suffer." We'd like to do something about that, but Humanities and Social Sciences doesn't seem to get the upper management support for academic programs, such as interdisciplinary studies, that we'd like to put into implementation.

"Faculty voted down the administration's budget, but senior administration did what they wanted anyway." As a result, most new sections were given to nursing, which we all agreed was needed, but there's dissatisfaction that sections went to technology and training, when the need was clearly in the Humanities and Social Sciences—departments that generated the numbers to warrant the added sections.

Another example of what faculty feel is a fiasco resulting from misplaced senior administrative decisions, and which went against faculty suggestions, is the third campus. "Management made a study on it, and kept the campus anyway, even though faculty didn't want it." Our reasons for going against the decision were that the campus represented a waste of time and money; it isn't really serving the student properly—with inadequate resources and space—and faculty are spending inordinate amounts of time commuting. "When we complied to the decision to keep it, we suggested that if it was effectively a done deal, then here's a list of ways that could make the campus work for us all." We provided several creative options, but no one seemed to hear us. "Our comments got stuffed at the back of the report. And even the information that was included was misrepresented." We felt the whole move was done in bad faith; no wonder we're skeptical. "The money that is going into that campus could be used in a far better way. We're all so resentful that our energies are drained with the efforts to be listened to, and we're already drained and short of time with all the driving way out there." Faculty don't have enough time as it is.

Faculty Needs

Faculty are feeling a growing amount of pressure, with increasing demands on workload from administrators and students alike. Many of these demands are perceived as unrealistic and not well considered. "We need more discussion so that we can come up with ways of meeting needs that will provide long-range benefits. These kinds of solutions cannot be found in a single group meeting."

Faculty feel we have no time to talk because we're constantly rushing to meet deadlines—marking, preparing, and meeting about administrative details. The result is a division among faculty that's not really there, or doesn't have to be. "We need reflection, contemplation, the exchange of information, and the wisdom that comes from analytical thinking. There simply isn't enough exchange among faculty. We're so

divided because there's no opportunity to come together." This "divide-and-conquer" attitude seems to work to the advantage of the administration. It's a huge issue something we don't understand.

"What we need is to get to know one another and the departments better—become acquainted with what we all actually do." But there just isn't time to go listen to the student performances in music and theater and to meet other instructors, and students, and talk to them. "We could use a coffee-break part of the college." But the master schedule we have is not community friendly and doesn't permit informal get-togethers. The situation we have of three disparate campuses means that everyone's madly commuting. "We're all these ships, passing in transit all the time. We need to feel the life and mind of the campus. We don't get to develop a sense of home."

Small group discussions among faculty work well, but we're not so sure how a big group would work out; it might not allow a balanced exchange. A group dialogue of seven or eight participants, like this one, is a good size and seems to work well.

Faculty are alive to the fact that change is happening, but we get so isolated from it. What we need is more discussion on what coming changes will mean. "We need to know what administration is trying to achieve. Tell us. Communicate." As for suggestions on practical things to ease the load, here are some ideas:

- Time releases for better planning and preparation of projects
- Better scheduling to allow common meet times and lunch meetings
- Coffee-break or after-hours drop-in meeting places
- Computing services support that meets student and faculty needs
- Effective leaders who really listen to faculty

Educational Leadership

Leadership in an educational institution requires guidance, decisiveness, and vision, just as it does in most organizations. But because a community college involves shared governance and responsibility for the education of students, and because the faculty are highly educated and informed, decision-making must be visible and, as much as possible, shared. Decisions that are made affect every level profoundly.

"Given past experiences, we have little trust that faculty will be listened to." The bottom line seems to be economics; we know and understand that. In fact, we can find efficient ways to use the funds. "Just give us the chance." We don't feel our leaders are necessarily doing the best jobs they could. "They come off as too self-serving. They're giving in because the profile of the college is improving and making them look good." But we feel we're being asked to water things down and that quality is going downhill. "It's like the country sending out the Grade A and B apples and keeping the mangled Cs. We don't want our education to be C level; we're capable and proud of our A level."

Educational leadership is key to the overall atmosphere of the college. Leaders need to be attuned to feelings of unrest and address hot issues with sensitivity and understanding before hostility sets in. "Open communication goes a long way, but online [e-mail] does not replace face-to-face communication." Coincidentally, e-mail is notorious for not working, and that's a problem that also needs to be settled. "In fact, the way technology was introduced didn't work for many of us. For example, we should be up and running with web pages, but we can't do it all on our own, and because we haven't had sufficient support we've had to give up."

With all the changes looming on the horizon—globalization and budget cutbacks— we are going to need effective leadership more than ever. "An example of leadership that worked was an administrator's foresight to bring in Asian language courses. Although it was against many faculty's wishes, we understood the need. The courses have done well and fulfilled a student need, and they're still popular." But it's very hard to accept what we don't understand. Effective leaders, we feel, need to be open communicators:

- Showing empathy, understanding, and the ability to listen
- Instilling and imparting respect and trust
- Consulting appropriately, with a commitment to follow-through
- Demonstrating wisdom through critical thinking and analysis rather than knee-jerk responses
- Making decisions that are not self-serving but for the good of the college, students, and faculty

Summary

This chapter presented the findings of Phase III of the research study through thematic analysis of data collected during the group dialogue session. Six of the original 16 faculty participants participated in the session with me, as researcher. I contributed by taking notes, offering comments, and then verifying my representation of the session with participants. I presented the dialogue session as a group understanding, organized according to themes that were identified in Phase II and further refined during Phase III, the group dialogue.

Participants mentioned several aspects to educational change, underlining once again that all change, whether naturally occurring or mandated, is bringing about a heavier workload. They also felt that the community college mission is being affected by globalization and business's demands; and that careful thought must be given to long-term effects when responding. Students are concerned about job preparedness, but they are sometimes unsure of what direction to take and are often unprepared for the educational demands of the college. They still need personal guidance and attention from faculty. Most faculty feel that because of increasing demands they don't have enough time to respond adequately to student and department needs. What faculty would like is more time and space for collegiality and the exchange of ideas. Careful thought must be given to planning, so that the intrinsic values of a Liberal Arts education are not sacrificed to the pressures for narrower skills training and a market approach to education. Faculty would like administrators to listen and to hear what they are saying, with some recognition of the contributions being made by faculty. Educational leadership, they feel, is most effective when leaders are open communicators. A summary of these themes, with an overview of the faculty participant perspectives, is presented in Table 6, next page. The findings presented here address the last two principal questions of the research study, which are discussed more specifically in Chapter 7.

Table 6. Overview of group dialogue themes and participant perspectives.

Theme	Principal Perspectives
Educational Change	Change can be seen from different viewpoints, and includes organizational and pedagogical activities. Most change is natural, some is mandated, and all increases workload. Globalization is an emerging trend, including internationalization, communication technology, and marketization, and is bringing about major change through budget cuts and trends toward privatization.
Community College Education	Community colleges serve and reflect society's needs, which include business. But business must not direct college's services and responsibilities. Colleges need to plan wisely, as education seems to be moving away from serving the whole person.
Student Characteristics	Students need a say, but they are also unsure of what they want. They trust faculty for guidance in identifying goals and processes; as well as preparation for advanced education and job readiness. They need to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
Faculty Roles & Characteristics	Faculty are directly responsible for providing education, and need to have more say, not less. They are a highly educated and informed group, who can provide expertise in planning and decision-making. Internal resistance and inflexibility are creating a challenge in dealing with change issues.
Educational Administration	Administrators are responsible for overall organization, but need to refer to qualified and reliable experts to guide important decision-making, especially in matters of educational programming and curriculum. Top-down decision-making is not well perceived or accepted among faculty.
Faculty Needs	Faculty need open communication and discussion, with a willingness from administration to listen and to help faculty do their best. Faculty need time for contemplation and exchange of information, as well as better scheduling for meeting collegially.
Educational Leadership	Community colleges require good leadership above all, with leaders who can make decisions that are not self-serving but for the common good of the college and its constituents.

CHAPTER 7: REFLECTIONS

We are always seeking meaning in what we do. We find this in small tasks, in large causes, and in our relationships. Whatever the form, the desire to create meaningful lives is an irresistible current in all organizations (Wheatley & Kellner-Rogers, 1998, p. 92).

This chapter takes a reflective look over the study to seek the meaning within and to pick up loose ends. The principal task, nonetheless, is to ensure that the study accomplished what it set out to do. In order to achieve that, I first address the soundness of the research process; then I respond to the principal questions of the study with insights and understandings; I continue with implications for further research; and finally, I close with some additional thoughts.

RESEARCH SOUNDNESS & QUALITY

This research study was a phenomenological exploration of educational change and, as such, examined reality as it appeared to faculty participants (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 1999). Phenomenology is the study of experience through examples, and aims to provoke reflection on the part of the reader, researcher, and participant (Van Manen, 1990). Therefore, the study should be examined according to the purpose and requirements of phenomenology. In this section I provide evidence to verify the adherence to proper method and the soundness and quality of the research design and process. According to Van Manen, phenomenological research follows a methodical structure. He has identified six research activities, or stages, of a study (pp. 30, 31):

1. Turning to a phenomenon of interest
2. Investigating experience as it is lived
3. Reflecting on essential themes that characterize the phenomenon
4. Describing the phenomenon through writing and rewriting
5. Maintaining a strong and oriented pedagogical relation to the phenomenon
6. Balancing the research context by considering the parts and the whole

My intent at all times throughout the study was to faithfully adhere to this process. The phenomenon under investigation was educational change, as experienced by community college faculty in the Liberal Arts, which I investigated through dialogic interviews and a short group dialogue session with faculty participants. I presented the context of the study in Chapter 4 and organized the research findings though transcription and theme analysis in Chapters 5 and 6. These three chapters went through many versions of writing, verification, and rewriting. All the while, I maintained my focus on the phenomenon of change and the way it affected faculty participants through what they were telling me. Theme analysis reflected the aspects of change perceived by participants. When I wrote about the findings, I kept the bigger picture—the community college itself and the world in which it is situated—in mind.

One of my main concerns throughout the process was the amount of influence or interference my presence would exert during the field research. As a feminist, I knew that my participation was an important part of the study and that my goal was to engage in dialogue as a co-participant (Collins, 2000; Harding, 1998; Lather, 1991; Olesen, 1994; Paludi & Steuernagel, 1990). My role as principal researcher was sensitive, because I did not want my own beliefs and values to override the views and perceptions that the participants held and I recognize that this goal was not always possible. When to add my comments and when to sit back and listen were critical moments for me to determine. Because participants had very few corrections at the verification stage and because I included their additions and comments, I feel I met the challenge and that I captured faculty voices with authenticity.

In describing research undertaken over the relatively short period of a school quarter, Lather (1991) made comments that could just as easily have been my own:

> Sequential interviews conducted in an interactive, dialogic manner . . . entail self-disclosure on the part of the researcher [and foster] a sense of collaboration. Group interviews provide tremendous potential for deeper probing and a reciprocally educative encounter. . . . Negotiation of meaning did not play as large a role as anticipated. [Participants] felt that the preliminary report accurately captured their sense of the situation. (p. 77)

Another aspect I considered carefully was the analysis and presentation of findings. I strove to be rigorous, organized, and disciplined. But I also wanted to capture the intent and voice of the participants without censuring their words or

feelings. Organizing the findings around themes was challenging, since no one theme was completely independent from another. But faculty participants focused on specific issues and areas of concern that naturally led to distinct categories. One of the defining moments, characteristic of phenomenology, was in the writing of the research itself. Gadamer (1975) as cited in Van Manen (1990) notes how thinking and speaking, rationality and language, derive their contemporary meanings from the same root: *logos*. "So phenomenology is the application of logos (language and thoughtfulness) to a phenomenon (an aspect of lived experience)" (p. 33). In other words, transcribing and writing about the research is an act of research itself. Writing makes visible and witnesses the action or event, thereby also validating it. I hope I have achieved this.

A crucial aspect, however, of any research is verifying the soundness and quality of the findings. Recall that in Chapter 3, I provided a set of primary and secondary criteria, adapted from Whittenmore, Chase, and Mandle (2001), which I used to ensure the soundness of research findings. Here are the criteria once again, which I address individually with evidence related to this study.

Primary Criteria:

1. ***Criticality***: Research results were presented to reflect the experience of the participants (as I interpreted them) through extensive use of narrative and quotes from individual and group dialogue. Selection of quotes was guided by thematic analysis that emerged from participant priorities to ensure criticality.

2. ***Integrity***: The *emic* perspective was reflected through quotations and comments from the participants, in their own words. Attributions about others, directly or indirectly involved in the study, are expressed in the words of the participants through their perspective.

3. ***Credibility***: The research design and process were supported by a literature review and the establishment of context based on college and government statistics and reports pertinent to the selected college. Related literature is also integrated with findings to address the research questions, as presented later in this chapter.

4. ***Authenticity***: The research experienced recursive and repetitive checks through participant verification, fact-checking by the institutional researcher and a coordinator, referral to information provided by college documents and administrators, and construction of tables for theme organization. Member-checking verified the authenticity of the presentation of findings.

Secondary Criteria:

1. ***Explicitness***: Methodological decisions, interpretations, and investigator biases are described throughout the study. A rationale was provided for the methodological decisions in Chapter 3.

2. ***Thoroughness***: The findings focused on the principal questions of the research study through three phases of research for completeness and saturation, and ensured triangulation through tables that cross-referenced themes with participant responses. Data were rich and comprehensive, with all points of view taken into consideration and included in the findings.

3. ***Creativity***: Choices in organizing, presenting, and analyzing data were made for clarity, focus, and authenticity. Themes emerged according to different aspects of education through participant direction. Findings from dialogic interviews were presented as individual quotes, while the findings from the group dialogue session were presented as a group thought process.

4. ***Vividness***: Thick and faithful descriptions were portrayed through direct attribution of quotes in Chapter 5 and through a group voice in Chapter 6, according to the process used. The findings were presented through quotations—faculty speaking in their own voice.

5. ***Congruence***: The process of dialogue brought about the emergence of interrelated themes congruent in both individual and group dialogues, as well as in the context of the local and global setting of the field site. Faculty participant responses were compared with faculty perceptions recorded in similar research studies, particularly in the following section of this chapter.

6. ***Sensitivity***: The investigation was carried out to be discrete and sensitive to the confidentiality concerns and time constraints of participants and of the community college students and administrators. All quotes were verified with each faculty participant who provided them and were used with permission. Pseudonyms were given to protect confidentiality.

This research study was designed to be thorough and precise at each step in order to ensure academic rigor. I believe, from the evidence submitted of my adherence to established criteria of research process, soundness and quality, and ethical considerations, as well as the establishment of a solid literary basis, that I have achieved that goal. I would like to now take a closer look at the principal research questions and examine them in light of the research results and relevant literature.

Insights & Understandings

The research report has thus far explored the phenomenon of educational change as perceived by community college faculty through the organization of findings around themes. In this section I discuss the findings in response to the four original questions of the research study:

1. What are the context and culture of the community college?
2. What is the background of the faculty participants?
3. What are faculty perceptions of change and its effects?
4. What do faculty want?

Themes emerging from the field research were discussed separately in Chapters 4 and 5, but these themes are interdependent and interrelated, and form a greater picture of educational change as a whole. The insights provided by faculty participants reflect findings recorded in current research and journal articles. The discussion that follows integrates the themes that emerged to address more specifically the research questions in view of related literature.

Context & Culture of the Community College

Warren College is a typical community college, situated on the Pacific Coast. Its mission and values, like most community colleges, reflect student-centeredness and responsiveness to community needs in a rapidly changing society. Although not representative of all community colleges, Warren College is experiencing many of the dilemmas faced by other educational institutions in North America. It is facing tremendous pressure—economically, politically, and socially— to transform its traditional system of operating, and ultimately to define what is meant by education. Administrators, faculty, and staff (not to mention students) are confused over what methods are best used to bring about that change, and even in defining what that change should be. Levin's research (2001) on globalization in the community college presents a state of affairs that faculty participants also described at Warren:

> Globalization is viewed as moving postsecondary institutions into a businesslike orientation, with its attendant behaviors of efficiency and productivity . . . and education as a commodity, readily available to all consumers, local and global. . . Furthermore, education is vocationalized, and training is driven by demands of business and industry: Conceptually, education and training are synonymous. (p. 9)

> The implications of globalization address the purposes of higher education, whether those include the transmission of culture and knowledge, the challenge to fundamental categories of knowledge and modern tradition, or training for the needs of capital. (p. 11)

INFLUENCES OF GOVERNMENT & INDUSTRY. Government, Levin goes on to say, has had a much greater impact over the years on the directing of community college practice and services, and thus has left little independence and flexibility possible:

> The role of government in changing community colleges was significant. . . . Governments persuaded and coerced colleges to increase their productivity to respond to workplace and business needs, and at least to affect an accountability posture to the public. [In doing so, colleges] precipitated tensions in labor relations, [expecting] faculty to teach greater numbers of students and to use technology to support their added responsibilities. (p. 113)

Faculty noted an increase in government-driven change initiatives as well as the more economically focused tone of educational reform. Larabee, cited in Mitchell (1998), remarked that "the social mobility goal has emerged as the most influential factor in American education," which, he argues "supported the development of consumerism among parents and students who shop for (and push for) vehicles of mobility within the educational sector" (p. 2). As a result, "the exchange value of credentials began to diverge from the learning that went into acquiring them." By constructing a system of education "so heavily around the goal of promoting individual social mobility, we have placed public education in service to private interests" (p. 2). These findings echo the concerns held by faculty participants.

Many participants expressed resentment toward the growing role of private industry in education. Change initiatives introduced during the 1990s, they felt, had a strong impact on the running of the institution and on the roles of faculty and administration as noted by Levin:

> By the final decade of the 20th century, curricular discussion shifted from curricula as inputs to curricula as outputs in the form of outcomes. With the concept of a learning college emerging as a beacon of change, the purposes of the institution decidedly moved from individual and community betterment to economic ends: development sites for workforce preparation. (p. 170)

> For the 21st century, community colleges will function more on a model compatible with business norms: a fluid organization, with little reverence for academic traditions, little evidence of a dominant professional class of faulty, and more evidence of a professional managerial class, greater reliance upon technology and less upon full-time labor. (p. 180)

Faculty perceptions of their weakening role in influencing the direction of education is borne out by current research. Levin confirms something faculty also noticed: "Corporate-style management [has] eroded the practice of employee participation, showing participation as an exercise in voice, not a critical component in decision-making" (p. 168). "While business moved toward collegial-style management, higher education institutions adopted more hierarchical and corporate modes of decision-making" (p. 92). These findings, which describe administration at seven other community colleges also describe participants' observations that their own administration had become more "top-down" in orientation.

IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY. Another impression is that the introduction of technology has shown few pedagogical benefits where faculty and students are concerned:

> To date, there is little empirical evidence of specific leaning outcomes that have been affected by information technologies. Yet the pressure to adopt these technologies in distance education and in classroom-based education continues unabated. (p. 82)

Educational institutions are caught in a transitional time warp. While they promote the use of technology, the systems and technical support are not yet able to meet current demands. As noted by Cuban, Kirkpatrick, and Peck (2001):

> We heard repeatedly from administrators, coordinators, teachers, and students about inadequate wiring, servers crashing, and constant replacement of obsolete software and machines. Hardcore advocates of technology prepared back-up lessons. . . . (p. 829)

As faculty participants also noted, technical support is rarely available at the precise moment needed during a time-limited class, so faculty themselves are struggling to fix technical problems, learn new programs, develop web pages, perform secretarial duties, and prepare back-up materials for occasions when technology fails. Moreover, "the compression of time [through e-mail and other technologies] relative to the past, affected the pace and quality of institutional work" (Levin, p. 169). "Information technologies were noted as improving services to students at all institutions, but increasing faculty's burdens" (pp. 94, 96). Cultural norms also altered with the introduction of change initiatives:

> Administrators customarily worked on weekends as well as claiming workdays of 12 to 14 hours. Faculty too, characterized themselves and their colleagues as burdened with large student numbers and heavy marking loads. . . . Diction included "skills development, employability skills, outcomes-based assessment, learner-centered" . . . .The diction used to describe intellectual, moral, social, and personal development—a prevalent description in earlier decades—was not evident. . . . Values altered as well, most notably shifting from an institutional framework to a corporate one with an economic agenda: to secure resources, increase productivity, and achieve growth (p. 164).

MISSION OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE. Faculty perceive that these subtle changes are affecting the concept of education, and that the mission of the community college is at a crossroads: "Society expects public higher education to advance social justice through increased access for underrepresented groups; provide service to communities; enhance economic development through training and applied research; and advance knowledge for the social economic, cultural, and scientific benefit of society" (Morey, 2000, p. 310). Evans (1996) notes a "growing gap between the rise in expectations and the resources available to fulfill them" (p.135).

Resources are diminishing, but the challenges are increasing. As faculty participants noted, the community college is serving a widening diversity of students, many of whom are not prepared to the academic level required of college study. Huber, as cited in Outcalt (2000), clarifies, "While faculty at all types of colleges and universities say that their students could be better prepared for college work, underpreparation is most marked at community colleges, most of which are open to any who wish to enroll" (p. 3). The open-door policy of the community college

appears to be at the heart of many difficulties. Students are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. As a result, many highly qualified students don't always get in, while many poorly prepared students do. But even more frustrating is the perception of a certain student attitude; many faculty participants commented on the "immaturity" of many students. The community colleges in Levin's study also reported "problems of student engagement" (p. 77).

Hansen (2000) describes another scenario: "The larger education mission often takes a back seat to a narrower preparation function, putting the college more in the role of service provider than educator. . . . Students who expect service from the institution [find] it difficult to take initiative for their own learning" (p. 6). Virtually all faculty participants had experienced student needs for "high-touch" attention, which runs counter to prescribed innovations such as distance learning. Closson, as cited in Outcalt (2000), used the example of self-directed learning to explain that "many students prefer to be taught, not facilitated" (p. 7). Clearly, higher education is in a transition period of defining what it will or won't do.

Summary. Warren College is finding itself in a similar position of transition as other community colleges. Despite three decades of continual growth, which have permitted a flexible introduction of relatively minor change initiatives, severe budgetary restrictions have just been announced due to government cutbacks in funding. These may bring about change of a larger order and force the question of the institution redefining itself. Issues that need to be addressed seriously and effectively for integration of change include technology and distance learning, new roles for faculty and administrators, admission requirements for students, partnerships and community building with the private sector, increasing competition and privatization of education, and ultimately, the mission and role of the community college. The future is now less predictable, but it can be guided.

Background of the Faculty Participants

Faculty participants in this study, like most faculty in the Liberal Arts, are highly educated and intelligent people. A large proportion have doctoral degrees and most have a great deal of teaching experience in the community college. Several have taken

on administrative duties to some degree, as chairs, coordinators, or union representatives. All have experienced and are familiar with educational change, with some instructors able to look back over 20 or 30 years of change activities.

GRAYING OF THE FACULTY. Many of the participants fit the demographic group described by Grubb (1999) of "aging baby boomers," who have, almost *en bloc*, worked within a particular historical context all their lives. He notes their "commitment to a broad array of students and to innovative teaching that motivated many faculty during the 1960s and early 1970s." Often the colleges were "founded by idealists . . . democracy and equity were the key concern" (p. 347). Evans (1996) describes such faculty as "the first large group ever to make a full career out of teaching" (p. 109). And he also remarks that many are "experiencing burnout, which is a normal response when conditions guarantee inconsequentiality . . . rising demands, and diminishing resources" (p. 96), concerns that were also voiced by faculty participants.

"Instructors become increasingly bitter," says Grubb, "when they see that they can't influence the conditions of their own teaching—when they see that they will have increasingly underprepared students without any help in teaching them" (p. 348). Schutz (2000) suggests:

> Most educators would like to believe their teaching has something to do with freedom. They hope their efforts will liberate their students, somehow empowering them and their communities to change our society for the better, and many educational theorists [Freire, Habermas, & Piaget cited] have attempted to explain how education might promote such goals. (p. 216)

Evans proposes that the graying of this teaching cohort means that a huge turnover is imminent, bringing in younger faculty with, presumably, a different cultural context (pp. 92, 93). Already, new faculty have begun to fill the ranks. But the younger faculty members I interviewed have come through a similar experience in their education as the older group. The Liberal Arts is still a relatively traditional field, even if, as one participant noted, learning activities are now designed to include more group participation. Faculty commented on how the core curriculum had not changed in at least 30 years, with some (such as in Music) tracing traditions back 100 years.

Axelrod (in Turk, 2000) warns, "If we ignore the question of how students learn, and the differences from how we as faculty learned, then we deny them a legitimate voice in the shaping of their own education" (p. 208). However, faculty explain that they are constantly adapting to the changing needs of students. The oft-quoted description of faculty roles and responsibilities from Dolence and Norris (1995) predicts that "faculty will play a variety of roles—researcher, synthesizer, mentor, evaluator and certifier of mastery, architect, and navigator" (p. 61). The truth is that faculty are already performing all those duties, and more. But their work is so often ignored, and even misunderstood, by those recommending the changes (Grubb, 1999).

Most faculty perform their work in isolation, partly from a tradition of departmentalization of the disciplines and the resulting inward focus, and partly from the lack of time to meet with faculty from other disciplines (Grubb, 1999; Evans, 1996; Toman, 1995; Bergquist, 1992). Faculty participants remarked that they were largely unaware of what other faculty and students did.

COLLEGIAL CULTURE. A strong tradition among faculty in academic subject areas has been the collegial culture (Bergquist, 1992), and the loss of it was foremost on the minds of participants when discussing change. Levin (2001) agrees: "The institution is no longer collegial" (p. 69). As Grubb (1999) puts it: "Collegiality is lacking for full-time instructors as well as part-timers; the culture established by the many administrators who are ignorant about teaching applies equally to all" (p. 335). Bergquist notes a common expectation among Liberal Arts faculty:

> Academics from the collegial culture [are] profoundly offended by the statement that administrators are responsible for establishing and supporting the curriculum or managing the academic personnel function. They believe that the faculty should control the curriculum and the hiring and firing of other faculty members and support staff. (p. 79)

Gallagher, cited in Levin (2001), says that "much conflict can be attributed to the fact that community colleges have attempted, on the one hand, to be collegial, participatory, and consultative, while, on the other hand, maintaining quite traditional, hierarchical structures for administration and institutional governance" (p. 65). The

loss of voice in decision-making, particularly around educational issues, is one of the hardest changes faculty are having to bear. And they are not accepting it easily.

Most faculty have come to teaching from the perspective of making a contribution to the betterment of society; and they feel that education fulfills a social and human purpose. As one participant remarked, "If I had wanted to be in business, I'd be a used car salesman." The movement toward considering education as a business, or even a money-making venture, is in direct conflict with the values of most instructors. They do, however, hold the concerns of students close to heart (Grubb, 1999; Corbin, 1998; Toman, 1995).

Summary. Faculty participants in this research have known a collegial culture throughout their own education and have experienced a shared sense of mission and purpose in the establishment of the community college. This shared feeling no longer seems to exist and seems even more absent in their dealings with administration. Their values are deeply connected to the social responsibilities of education and to student needs, which they generally feel is at odds with the priorities of administrators.

Faculty Perceptions of Change & Its Effects

Faculty perceive that the word *change* is being overused and has become a buzz word, devoid of meaning. The real danger, they feel, is that the attention over constant change initiatives masks the pedagogical change that is already occurring in most classrooms. Birnbaum (2000) cites Collins in saying that "higher education does not need to invent more change. Change in higher education is constant" (p. 239). Participants concur that they adapt to change on a daily basis. Larger, structural, change is also happening and going unnoticed—including the introduction of interdisciplinary Associate Arts degrees and learning communities, which faculty have been developing and implementing on their own. These changes, they note, are meeting student needs far better than the "empty" initiatives being recommended by government and administrators.

Cynicism. Faculty have experienced the rhetoric of change initiatives before, in different forms, and this may explain their reaction. Zorn, Christensoen, and Cheney

(1999) witness the result of this *déjà vu*: "Staff resist major organizational changes, often with a 'flavor-of-the-month' response. Faculty's natural cynicism tends to push up another notch [at the mention of yet another great idea]" (p. 31). One of the reasons, the authors say, is that faculty "hold a deep-seated questioning of the motives, goals, and authenticity of any program when they suspect that there will be no follow-up" (p. 32). Moreover, "the act of making proposals itself becomes a key work activity, pulling faculty and staff energies away from more basic tasks" (p. 14). Virtually every research study has shown that faculty do not have enough time (Levin, 2001; Grubb, 1999; Evans, 1996; Saladin, 1998; Toman, 1995), which is at the heart of most resistance. These comments are certainly consistent with the perceptions of the faculty with whom I spoke.

The busywork that most change initiatives inflicts on faculty is deeply resented. The perception that initiatives coming from faculty themselves often go unnoticed and unsupported by administrators only adds to the resentment. Kolodny, as cited in Glenn (1999–2000), notes "the most vexing problem currently facing academe [is that] there are no reward systems for change and no incentives to be bold, visionary, or experimental" (p. 46). Lack of recognition for change efforts and contributions was high on the list of complaints of many participants.

Resistance. Attitudes of resistance, which administrators or government might be sensing, may also be coming from the perceived implications that faculty are not doing their job and are not willing to do anything differently. Boyett and Boyett (1998) found many instances where the "people who were supposed to change stubbornly resisted doing what the change advocates wanted them to do. People don't resist change so much as *being* changed" (p. 49). Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1996) explain:

> We say that people innately resist change. But the resistance we experience from others is not to change itself. It is to the particular process of change that believes in imposition rather than creation. It is the resistance of a living system to being treated as a non-living thing. (p. 99)

Kotter (1996) adds, "Most human beings, especially well-educated ones, buy into something only after they have had a chance to wrestle with it. Wrestling means asking questions, challenging, and arguing" (pp. 99-100). Faculty feel strongly that there has

been a lack of time for contemplation and discussion about change, particularly among themselves. But they also regret the lack of information and communication from the administrators who champion the change initiatives. The disagreeing, or even arguing, that may characterize faculty discussion is simply viewed as an important stage of exploration and planning. Faculty crave the opportunity to meet and talk this way.

One of the reasons that difficulties have arisen in the past is that the education initiatives that so closely impact curriculum and teaching, traditionally the domain of faculty, are perceived to have been mandated and implemented without much faculty input. Thaxter and Graham (1999) note in their research that overall, "Faculty feel disconnected from the important decisions within the college" (p. 655). This disconnect was expressed by most study participants and they felt strongly that their view should not only be listened to, but heard. "A chronic complaint of faculty is that their input is solicited but then ignored" (Evans, 1996, p. 66).

Faculty are also concerned about globalization and the changes that it brings, as summarized here by Levin (2001):

> Changes to both work and education can be linked to globalization as these are both fostered and sustained by globalization. There are changes in the nature of goods delivered (knowledge), the way the goods are organized and presented (curriculum), the place where knowledge is conveyed (classroom), and the way knowledge is conveyed (pedagogy). (p. 39)

LOSS OF QUALITY. Faculty participants perceive that these changes need to be considered carefully and guided by an educational plan, or their impact may have disastrous long-term effects on society. Students, now more than ever, they feel, need a wider view of the world and a better understanding of today's global society than can be provided by training. Faculty are concerned that in the trend to marketize and commercialize community college services, quality and academic standards are being sacrificed. Noble (in Turk, 2000) warns against the "digital diploma mills"—degrees by distance for little effort and much money. Faculty observe a devaluing of the notion and purpose of education. They are concerned that administrators are unaware of the essential issues.

Central to the argument is faculty's distinction between *education* and *training*, which is also differentiated by Nachmanovitch (1990):

> We often make the mistake of confusing education with training, when in fact these are very different activities. Training is for the purpose of passing on specific information necessary to perform a specialized activity. Education is the building of a person. (p. 118)

This distinction, which is not seen to be understood by administration, further underlines faculty perception that administrators don't empathize with faculty's values and worldview, and moreover are not aware of what faculty really do in the classroom. Faculty are concerned that the increased trend toward privatization of educational services may result in the erosion of a Liberal Arts education, affecting students' preparation for the world of work and society in the 21st century. Students trust faculty for guidance and face-to-face attention, which may be lost if educational technologies take over, as will the nature of social interaction. Faculty are in a dilemma wondering how to "serve the customer" without selling their souls.

Swenson (1998), regional vice-president of the University of Phoenix, criticizes the distinction between education and training and notes the condescension of faculty when they speak of training. However, his supporting comments are of the tone that only angers faculty: "We're no longer educating genteel elites; our mandate now is to educate a significant portion of our population, not only for life but to make a living, too" (p. 1). He continues by adding, "The goal of postsecondary educators should be that every one of our graduates knows and is able to do what his or her degree implies." These are the same quality concerns at the heart of faculty wishes and fears as well. In fact, the two sides are saying the same thing—but the administrator is perceived as declaring his (or her) mistrust of faculty to do their job, and faculty are mistrustful that the intentions are to demean or misrepresent faculty. Swenson claims that "contrary to academic belief, businesspeople do not want narrowly educated employees." His statement is almost identical to statements faculty participants made in our group dialogue. However, when an employer is also expecting "increased productivity," which part of the service (or student) are faculty to sacrifice when they are teaching to the whole student?

Ironically it would appear that the aim of education is in transition: "Student learning priorities shifted from an acclaimed focus upon personal development and career and educational preparation to skills development and work-force training;

college priorities shifted from the needs of individual students to those of employers" (Levin, 2001, p. 55). This is precisely the focus that appalls faculty.

REDUNDANCY. Applying the model of competition to instructional institutions, says Grubb (1999), "suggests that teachers are interchangeable parts in a large 'firm' producing courses . . . and that continuity among classes and collaboration among faculty are unimportant" (p. 336). The irony of this perceived movement isn't lost on faculty; they will become redundant. And as Levin points out, it's "hard to expect flexibility when people are always worried about losing their job" (p. 68). This concern is not yet present in high-enrollment Liberal Arts programs, but with cutbacks looming, it may become a very real fear and constraining factor for change. The integration of distance learning may also further impact faculty employment.

The overriding concern on the part of faculty, regarding educational change, is expressed by Polster (in Turk, 2000):

> We should expect, rather than an ideology, that a new philosophy of education would motivate the changes that are being introduced. But it is precisely the absence of any guiding philosophy of education that makes them so disturbing: educational institutions are being appropriated, not for a new educational agenda, but rather for a particular economic agenda. (p. 219)

SUMMARY. In sum, faculty are concerned that educational leaders are not mindful of the bigger picture. As a result, faculty perceive leaders as making knee-jerk reactions to please business, without a central plan that holds to a vision of education and common mission for the community college. As Grubb (1999) notes, "the second-chance mission of the community college cannot be maintained if increased demands confront dwindling resources" (p. 347). Faculty feel that serious consideration needs to be given to the institution's current mission and purpose.

What Faculty Want

Faculty have clear ideas on what they need to help them deal with educational change, and they would just like to be asked. They are intelligent and committed professionals, with excellent problem-solving skills.

Time & Support. One of faculty's most persistent needs is for support with the rising workload brought on by the increase in diversity of students, new technologies, and administrative duties. Plater (1995) notes, "Faculty feel pushed to the limit of what they can do as individuals. They cannot possibly work more hours in a week: their cynicism grows along with public criticism" (p. 23). The extra demands are taking their toll. And most of all, faculty need more time. More time might allow collaborative problem-solving, which could benefit the entire college. As noted by Lee, Smith, and Croninger (cited in Evans, 1996), "Faculty want to "work together to examine the challenges they face, and then decide—as a team of thoughtful, committed professionals—how best to proceed" (p.231).

Faculty are craving open communication and discussion with each other and with administration. They bring up the need for more time and better attention to class scheduling in order to meet collegially, especially over issues of pedagogy. Rather than top-down implementation of quick-solution workshops, Grubb (2001) found that

> Instructors desired professional development activities that were integrated into their professional lives rather than mere one-session affairs. Furthermore, they wanted activities that held at least an implicit focus on building and sustaining collegiality between themselves and their peers. (p. 285)

"Most improvement schemes . . . pay little attention to the lived realities of the educators who must accomplish change or to the practical problems of institutional innovation. This blind spot is more than just unfortunate; it is often fatal," says Evans (1996, p. 91). He adds that "recognition refers to praise or positive feedback, but also to validation, to acknowledging and affirming a truth about a person or situation" (p. 254). Grubb found that "even where administrators support innovation, their support tends to be verbal encouragement of those who are experimenting on their own, rather than time and money resources for more instructors to innovate" (p. 304).

CONSIDERATION. Where innovation is concerned, faculty would like input to the decisions that affect them, particularly in their teaching roles and in program planning, and they need time for meeting with colleagues to discuss issues of curriculum, pedagogy, and change. Faculty bemoan the bygone era of collegiality (Turk, 2000; Steinberg, 1999; Dickinson, 1999; Grubb, 1999; McGrath & Spear, 1991). Perhaps there is a way to bring it back in a new way.

Faculty members need to understand and talk out ideas before they can embrace them (Argyris, 1991). Management and change gurus have made it clear that employees must be able to connect personally to a change initiative (Senge, 1999; Boyett & Boyett, 1998; Kotter 1996; & DePree, 1993). They need to understand how they fit in, how they can contribute, and how they will benefit. If these needs are not met, claims Senge, a "commitment gap develops and they will not participate fully. . . and not be committed" (p. 160). As Evans (1996) explains:

> Change is a multidisciplinary process that involves all aspects of the organization: its structure, its politics, and especially its people. [It is] a process that requires people to learn new technologies, practice new behaviors, and ultimately, adopt new beliefs. Change is not a predictable enterprise with definite guidelines, but a struggle to shape processes that are complex and elusive. (p. 15)

They feel that administration needs to give more thought to the long-range effects of new change initiatives on education. Most important, they want leaders who will listen to what they have to say, understand their needs, and recognize and validate the work they are doing. As Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1996) put it:

> People do not respond for long to small and self-centered purposes or to self-aggrandizing work. Too many organizations ask us to engage in hollow purposes, to engage our energy in competitive drives. Those who offer us this petty work hope we won't notice how lifeless it is. They hope that life's great motions are somehow absent from us. (p. 103)

Too many of the promoted change activities are seen by faculty to be more self-serving to administrators' reputations than focused on the college mission, and faculty feel caught in the middle. Efforts to include faculty must be genuine in intention. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) warn that faculty do not hold high levels of trust when they are suspicious of the agendas:

> Shared decision-making, as it has typically been exercised in schools, has been criticized as affording teachers little real influence over organizational decisions that matter to them: Teachers are asked to be involved in decision-making simply to increase their satisfaction, loyalty, and acceptance of decisions. This might be called contrived collaboration. (p. 582)

Schlechty, cited in Evans (1996), says "If they are to invest their time, energy, support, creativity, and insight, they must be able to expect in return something they value" (p. 223). Birnbaum (2000) remarks: "We know from experience that it is easier to get people to implement a management strategy inconsistent with their values than it is to get internal combustion from water" (p. xii)." He adds, "Those elements seen as illegitimate and unrelated to core values and ways of thinking are not institutionalized; they do not endure" (p. 10).

One of the fears in the move to considering education as a business is that the values of the community college itself will be lost. Talking about education as a moneymaking venture is bound to rub the wrong way. Faculty are concerned about the direction that education seems to be taking, and they would like to be included in the discussion and decision-making around institutional values and programming.

Moffett (2000) suggests that "the seeds of change are nourished in a climate of respectful and open dialogue" (p. 36). And Bohm (1985), a proponent of dialogue, explains that "a collective process of thought is the means by which understanding can be enriched" (p. xii). Faculty have suggested that open and honest communication is essential. Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1996) put it this way:

> If we seek our own effectiveness, we cannot help but embrace more and more of those who are connected to us in ways we refused to see. Open and inquiring, such systems become wiser about themselves. They become more aware of their interdependencies. (p. 102)

LEADERSHIP. Faculty expressed an urgent and compelling need for good leadership in times of change. Evans (1996) clarifies: "Major change almost never wells up from the bottom. It begins near the top . . . and it doesn't begin with broad involvement and consensus" (p. 244). So leadership is essential, and "true participatory leadership is binary; it enables ideas to move both up and down the organization" (Evans, p. 242). But functions don't define the ideal leader.

Bergquist (1996) claims that "academics in the collegial culture still look for charismatic characteristics in the people they allow to lead them, just as they did in colonial, British, and German institutions" (p.44). His observation may correlate to the description made by Evans, who says that "charisma in leadership [is] the ability to touch people deeply, to enlist people in a cause by forging a unique and powerful bond with them" (p.169).

Faculty participants listed key characteristics as authenticity, trust, and respect. These characteristics ring true with Evans's views on educational leadership: "Authenticity . . . involves integrity in action . . . leading by example . . . and practicing what one preaches" (p. 224) He also says that "reform can only be built on a platform of trust and consensus" (p. 125) and that "trust is the essential link between the leader and led, vital to people's job satisfaction and loyalty, vital to followership." He warns that "once damaged, it is nearly impossible to repair" (p. 183). This is an important point, for "none of us willingly follows someone we distrust even if he proposes ideas we agree with" (p. 126). Evans explains that trust derives from consistency in personal beliefs, organizational goals, and work performance.

TRUST. Trust comes up often in literature as a vital component of leadership. Reviewing four decades of research on trust, Hoy and Tarter (1995) as cited in Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000), explain that trust involves several characteristics, including benevolence, reliability, and competence, and that "good intentions are not enough" (p. 557). Another key component of trust is openness, which was also emphasized by faculty participants, and is described as "the extent to which relevant information is not withheld. . . . Such openness signifies a kind of reciprocal trust, a confidence that neither the information nor the individual will be exploited" (p. 558).

While the condition of establishing trust seems an easy one, the authors remark on the challenges to trust that have been presented by recent changes in education:

> Higher standards and more accountability have fostered conditions of suspicion and blame . . . A multicultural society with diverse values and shifting populations makes the generation of trust a major challenge. Adding to this formidable task is the tendency for distrust, once established, to be self-perpetuating. (p. 585)

It must be said that trust is a not easy to establish and maintain, and also requires a great deal of courage on the part of leaders. Trust implies a willingness to risk vulnerability: "Leaders [who involve teachers in an important decision] not only risk losing control of the decision but remain responsible for the outcome" (p. 556).

Evidently, trust is a two-way street, and needs to be present on both sides. An interesting aspect of trust lies in the variation in expectations between faculty and administrators. Citing research by Gabarro (1978), Tschannen-Moran and Hoy signal that for both administrators and faculty, integrity is key to trust in hierarchical relationships; however, "Presidents are more concerned with the competence and reliability of subordinates, while subordinates place more importance on benevolence and openness" (p. 573). While faculty might question whether their relationship with administrators is purely hierarchical, their comments reflect a similar emphasis on relative importance of characteristics.

SUMMARY. Faculty participants had much to say about educational change and their role in it. They are extremely aware that more change is on the horizon. Rather than resist it, they are up to the challenge of meeting it, as long as administrators can provide the time and space to talk about it collaboratively and plan ahead. Faculty want and need administration to not only listen, but to hear what they have to say, and to act on their concerns. Change will not happen with purpose and direction without the buy-in of those who are to carry it out and without the acknowledgment and validation of their contributions. Evans (1996) sums up the essence of faculty comments: "Student needs and best classroom practice are the core and cause of reform, but faculty needs and best leadership practice are the keys to its implementation" (p. xiv). Faculty want to be included in planning and decision-making where these activities affect their roles and responsibilities—as ultimately do most educational change initiatives.

Summary of Faculty Insights

Faculty perceptions of change provided a range of insights into the effects and implications of change, which are also supported by literature and related research. Taking the faculty point of view into consideration may facilitate the planning and implementation of change in the community college. Their perceptions offer thoughtful reflection and the possibilities for deeper understanding. Here is a summary of what Liberal Arts faculty at Warren College feel is important for leaders to consider in bringing about educational change:

- ***Make change for a worthy or merited purpose:*** Consider change activities seriously and only adopt initiatives that are essential and important, rather than follow the latest trend or attempt to make political statements.

- ***Listen to what faculty have to say:*** Include faculty at every stage of planning and implementation, by listening and hearing what they have to say. Incorporate faculty suggestions as much as possible, and when not possible, clearly explain why. Keep the lines of communication open as early on as possible—well before solutions have been found.

- ***Allow faculty to wrestle with the challenges:*** Lay the problems and options before faculty with honesty and transparency. Provide faculty opportunities to not only discuss the problems, but to come up with solutions and propositions. Consider these ideas seriously, rather than immediately turning to outside experts for quick solutions. Open up the discussion to include both faculty and administration, but allow time for faculty to mull things over among themselves.

- ***Provide faculty with support and recognition:*** Faculty need to hear how their contributions fit into the greater community college mission. They need to be validated, not only through (honest and authentic) recognition, but also through time, financial support, and consideration of their needs.

- ***Keep student needs as a central priority:*** Education is a service that community colleges provide for its students, not for political glory or financial gain of its employees or shareholders. One of the goals of education is to help students discover who they are and what they want to do in life; therefore, students are often somewhat unaware of their real needs when they first enroll. Giving into the consumer aspect of education provision doesn't really help the student or the college, or even the society as a whole.

- ***Never lose sight of the human values and social purpose of education:*** When faculty are told, or even asked, to act in ways that contradict the very reason they became educators, the request is doomed for failure. Faculty resist being put in the position of "selling their soul"; they need to see the intrinsic value of a change initiative. They need to understand how it actually fits into their worldview—and how it improves the lives of students. Change initiatives must be seen to affirm the values that define higher education.

These are perceptions of educational change that were offered by faculty from Warren College, with their suggestions for making the implementation of change initiatives successful and meaningful in their lives and in the future of the community college where they work. Most important, in the rush to transform higher education, faculty feel that the human element cannot be discounted or forgotten, for they are the ones who deal with the consequences of change.

Summary of Personal Insights

As a phenomenological study, the results of this research are not generalizable. Nor does the study assume that the reader should accept and integrate these findings in their daily routines as is. But I feel that the study has provided a forum for the faculty voice and a source from which community college personnel can continue the dialogue. The findings offer food for thought: "tactful thoughtfulness, situational perceptiveness, discernment, and depthful understanding" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 156). If faculty at Warren College see change as reported here, then do faculty in other institutions have similar perceptions?

Perhaps reading and discussion of these findings will lead to further dialogue among the faculty participants themselves and among other members of the community college where this research took place. Perhaps faculty and administration at other community colleges will be encouraged to undertake similar inquiries on their own campuses.

Faculty and administrators seem to talk about issues differently. Perhaps this study provides a way to explore issues of change in more depth from the different points of view. This is not to say that a leader has to agree with those perceptions or to see things the same way. But leaders of community colleges can benefit from a better understanding of the faculty reality and would be better prepared to engage in the type of leadership that values and considers faculty perspectives. To be listened to and to be heard are what faculty want—this study shows the importance of investing the time to listen and find out what faculty's values are.

One of the results of the study is that it enabled me to reflect more deeply on the way I make sense of lived experience—my own and others'. It permitted me to reflect on the topic of change, which preoccupied me and many of the faculty with whom I worked, and it provided a way of making these preoccupations more explicit. My aim in this research was to provide information for the "reflective practitioner" and the "deliberative decision-maker" as described by Schön (1983) and Van Manen (1990).

Implications for Further Study

A phenomenological description is always one interpretation, and no single interpretation of human experience will ever exhaust the possibility of yet another complementary, or even potentially richer or deeper description (Van Manen, 1990, p. 31).

This research study was a phenomenological exploration of educational change as experienced by Liberal Arts faculty in one community college and, as such, must be considered in context. It was not meant to represent the voice of all faculty in every institution, and does not imply that the results are transferable from one community college to another.

These findings are not generalizable, but they may reflect similarities and encourage faculty and administrators to consider perceptions in their own community colleges. More research could be undertaken to confirm or compare experiences among community colleges in North America, or indeed in the rest of the world, as a result of local or global forces.

The research presented in this dissertation could also be continued to provide more depth and breadth to the understanding of educational change, and could also include other dimensions. Suggestions for further research include:

- ***Perceptions of change from the same faculty participants over time:*** Major changes appeared on the horizon just as the research study was finishing. Faculty may have already changed some of their perceptions or have had new insights. A study could be made to check in with faculty views and to perhaps even follow them through a mandated change process.

- ***Perceptions of change from other community colleges:*** This study's results could be compared with those from institutions with different leadership styles, faculty of different ages and backgrounds, a broader range or variety of programs, unionized or non-unionized staff, or those that are private or focus on corporate interests. Such studies would provide the means for a deeper understanding of faculty perceptions and afford contrast and comparison among different faculty groups and institutions.

- ***Perceptions of change from the administrative view:*** While this study looked at change from the faculty perceptive, a view from the "other side" would provide an additional dimension to the understanding of educational change. Such research might illustrate areas of commonality or difference, and might very well provide insight into the possible reconciliation of differences. If faculty feel ignored and misunderstood, it is quite possible that administrators do too.

- ***Action research into group dialogue:*** Faculty have expressed the need to meet and understand together the impact and meaning of change in education and of their roles in it. Dialogue, as described by Bohm (Isaacs, 1999; Senge, 1999; Bohm, 1985) provides a forum for creating a shared understanding, which can lead to action with a common purpose. Dialogue is a continuous process, best undertaken over a longer period of time than this research study afforded. Dialogue provides the opportunity for faculty to meet collegially as well as a venue for administrators and faculty to come together with the goal of shared understanding and purpose. Such a process may in itself provide a hands-on approach to dealing with change in the community college.

- ***Follow-through of change implementation:*** With major change activities on the horizon, a research project could be undertaken to observe and document the process of their implementation. By following the process used, another understanding of educational change could be made. An additional follow-up could include the perceptions of faculty before and after the process, to determine what works and what doesn't from a faculty viewpoint.

- ***Study of the changing missions of community colleges:*** As current literature indicates, and as substantiated by this research study's findings, change is bringing about a questioning of the mission and purpose of the community college in the 21st century. Much research has gone into understanding faculty roles and administrative actions. However, little is yet known of the impact of global change on the role of the community college.

- ***Study of the impact of privatization on public education:*** Faculty's overriding concern is that the private sector may influence the community college to such an extent that education becomes a product for profit rather than remain an intrinsic value of its own right. Privatization has many facets to study, including the societal impact of such a move and the possible dissolution of education as a public right. Since we are currently caught up in this trend, we really don't yet know all its implications.

- ***Review of practices in response to budget restrictions:*** Economic restraint and government cutbacks to public education are requiring new approaches to the delivery of post-secondary education. The adage is to "do more with less." What are colleges doing to meet these demands? Are faculty and administration able to remain true to their values (and those of the community college) and still provide effective education, in the public and the private sector? A sharing of practices may provide alternatives for community colleges to consider when making their own decisions and plans.

Such research studies would help to inform community college faculty and administrators in finding tactful and empathic ways to deal with educational change. Further research would also contribute to a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the concept of change and would complement understandings from different viewpoints and actions taken. As a global society, and in the shared community of higher education, change may be easier to deal with if the worldviews and perceptions of all parties are taken into consideration.

Concluding Thoughts

The world we know is the one we share with others (Grumet, as cited in Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, & Taubman, 1996, p. 377).

Change in the community college is a world I have come to know better through this research and it is the one I have attempted to share with you, the reader. My goal was to present a faculty view of educational change; and as a faculty member myself, my views have inextricably become part of the results. What I have presented here is only a snapshot of faculty perceptions at a particular time and place in the world. And time has moved on since the moment I began my research. Over the interminably long process of this research study, I have discovered that change can never be explained in a definitive way—because its context is always changing! In fact, the context of the research study itself changed during the process of gathering data. At the onset, most change under discussion was that of the first-order: educational initiatives that were being regularly introduced into the community college.

Mid-process, however, rumors started to circulate that major, or second-order, changes might soon be in the offing via new government mandates. Conversations began to take on a different color and have a certain tone of urgency. Even now, as I write, more change is in the air.

For most of us, especially faculty members, change has become part of our daily lives. Some of it involves time-consuming and even frustrating activities, but we take them as they come because change is unavoidable and sometimes even necessary. For decades, instructors have quietly (and invisibly, as Grubb would say) gone about adapting and changing courses and classes as needed. But time has become a precious commodity (ever since the introduction of modern technology, it would seem) and any new activity that is considered time-consuming for no understandable purpose is not well received, and for obvious good reason. We seem to have run out of creative ways of finding or making time available.

We are in a period of change that seems almost beyond our control. World events are affecting us at every level. Perhaps they are simply the signs of the proverbial invisible hand, clearing away the chaos to recreate a new balance, and in so doing, reveal what is really important in life. Whatever the reason, education as we have traditionally known it is in transformation. Perhaps we are in no greater period of change than 20 years ago, a time of severe budgetary cuts and rumors of the demise of the Liberal Arts. We will only know in retrospect. Nonetheless, change can be hard to accept, especially when it is abrupt and unwanted; but as Plater (1995) says, we needn't feel nostalgic about the period we are leaving:

> What we are leaving behind is not all that great. . . .The future can be better. . . .
> We have a chance to remake the [postsecondary institution] into a more collegial, stimulating, and varied place than it has become. . . .
> The key to our success surely will be our willingness to act together as a community with shared values and commitments. (p. 33)

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

School of Education
Oregon State University
Corvallis, Oregon 97321-3502

7 September 2001

Department of
XXXXXXXXXXX College

Dear :

SUBJECT: REFLECTIONS ON CHANGE: A DIALOGUE WITH FACULTY

During the last decade, many change initiatives have been introduced to community colleges. The goal of these changes has been to better serve the community, whether the community is defined as the students who attend the college, the staff and faculty, the college administration, the people who live nearby, business, or the government itself.

I would like to talk with you to find out what changes are of interest or concern to you and how they affect you in your college. I am a faculty member in XXXXXXXX at XXXXXXXX and a former XXXX Initiatives Coordinator and XXXXXX chair of XXXXX. I am also a doctoral candidate at the School of Education at Oregon State University. I have completed my coursework and am currently doing my research and dissertation.

The title of my research proposal is *Reflections on Change: A Dialogue with Faculty*. My research focus is on the experiences and perceptions of faculty in the context of change.

As a fellow liberal arts faculty member, your views are especially important to me. That is why I would like to invite you to participate in my study. Your commitment would be to talk to me one-on-one, in confidence and at your convenience, for a preliminary interview of one hour, and then, if you agree, for two or three more conversations of one to two hours. For more information, please feel free to contact me at my home office: XXXXXXXXXX or through e-mail at xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx@xxxxxxxxxx.

I will be contacting you soon,

Sincerely,

Katherine Zmetana

APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Informed Consent Form

Name of Study: Reflections on Change: A Dialogue with Faculty

Researcher: Katherine Zmetana, EdD candidate, Oregon State University

Principal Researcher and Supervisor: Dr. George Copa, School of Education, Oregon State University

Description/Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to engage with community college faculty in dialogue to identify and understand concerns and issues regarding change.

This study will focus on the reflections and experiences of faculty to understand the effects of change and to develop an understanding of the feelings, motives, and ways of responding to change that work with and for faculty.

Research Process

The student researcher will engage in the research process as an interviewer and equal participant, observing and discussing change initiatives in the community college and/or the community college system, and the issues and concerns of faculty facing these changes. The dialogue sessions will take place one-on-one with each volunteer participant (once for 50 minutes; more if the participant desires). The principal researcher may ask for follow-up or debriefing interviews or group sessions.

The dialogue sessions will be audio-taped and transcribed for data collection and analysis purposes. The student researcher may also take field notes during the sessions. The transcriptions and notes may be shared with the participants involved in each session. If a participant wishes to rephrase or add to a transcript, even if the accuracy is not in question, the researcher will consider those additions with the participant in order to fully capture the intent of the comments.

Risks or Inconvenience

There are no physical or psychological risks expected from the individual dialogues or the group meetings. If a participant should become uncomfortable, she or he is free to withdraw from the discussion at any time. Participants are also invited to suggest rephrasing or changes to the transcript if it does not accurately reflect thoughts and feelings, regardless of what was actually said. Participants of the dialogue sessions are encouraged to be prudent in discussions outside the group.

Benefits of the Study

There is no monetary benefit from this study. However, participants may provide insights into the limited knowledge on the subject of change in the community college that will benefit them and possibly others. Participants will experience first-hand the dialogue process, and may gain a better understanding of their own perceptions and actions and those of their colleagues as faculty members, working to deal with change.

Confidentiality

The institution will not be identified in the final report. No participants will be identified by name in the transcripts; each will assume a pseudonym for reporting purposes. No participant will be identified in a report or publication about this study. All references that might link names to participants will be destroyed as soon as the final transcript is completed. Access to individual data is limited to the principal researcher and supervisor only. The final draft will be available to all participants.

Right to Withdraw

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Participants may refuse to participate or withdraw at any time.

I have retained a signed copy of this consent form.
I volunteer to participate in this study.

_____ _____

Participant's Signature Date

_____ _____

Student Researcher's Signature Date

If you have any questions during the course of this study, please contact:

Katherine Zmetana XXXXXXXX (home) / xxxxxxxxxxxx@xxxxxx
or
Dr. George Copa XXXXXXXX (OSU) / xxxxxxxxxxxx@xxxxxx

If you have any questions about your rights as a human subject, please contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Coordinator at Oregon State University, 541.737.3437 / IRB@orst.edu

APPENDIX C: PARTICIPANT PROFILE QUESTIONS

PARTICIPANT PROFILE Questions for
Reflections on Change: A Dialogue with Faculty

1. **Tell me about yourself and how long you have been at XXXXXXX.**

2. **What are the changes taking place in your department/program/college?**

4. **What is it like to be in the college while these changes are occurring?**

3. **Do you perceive sources of new energy and incentive? What are they?**

4. **Do you perceive sources of irritation / problems? (What are they?)**

5. **What do you think you / some people are happy about regarding these changes?**

6. **What do you think you / some people may be unhappy about regarding these changes?**

7. **Is there something you would like to improve about the changes being made? (What is it?)**

8. **Is there something you would like to improve about the process being used? (What is it?)**

9. **What do you think the reasons are for this situation or these reactions?**

10. **What do you think could/should be done about it? Do you have suggestions for improvement?**

APPENDIX D: INVITATION TO GROUP DIALOGUE SESSION

SPECIAL INVITATION

16 October 2001

Dear Liberal Arts Colleague:

SUBJECT: EARLY RESULTS FROM MY INTERVIEWS AND A REQUEST TO MEET

Individual discussions with you seem to indicate that change in the community college is continuous or at a standstill, yet recent literature and government actions may indicate otherwise.

I'm enclosing a book summary of *Globalizing the Community College* and a book review of *The Enterprise University*. In my opinion, the findings in these books reflect some of the comments you have made and may be of interest to Liberal Arts faculty, reflecting the new direction of educational changes. I would like to discuss them with you.

Please take a look at the discussion points I've noted on the book summary. I hope you'll want to talk about them in a group meeting—as part of my doctoral research and out of personal concern.

An informal meeting is scheduled for Monday 22 October from 4:00 to 6:00 in a comfortable room at XXXXX College (yet to be confirmed). Snacks and refreshments will be provided.

Please RSVP so that I know how much food to provide. Leave a message on my voice mail XXX, at my home office (XXXXX)); or through e-mail at xxxx@xxxxxx. (I also welcome written comments.)

I hope to see you Monday.
Sincerely,

Katherine Zmetana
Instructor, XXXXXXXXXXX
Doctoral Candidate at Oregon State University

NOTE: This discussion is confidential and limited to faculty members who have interviewed with me. It is in no way instigated by management, nor a conduit of information to them. As a matter of protocol, I have obtained permission from the president, vice-president of instruction, the deans XXXXXXX, and the Ethics Committee. XXXX College is providing me support through the use of rooms, telephones, photocopying, and meeting supplies (but not tapes, transcribing, or writing). And I owe nothing in return. My commitment is to faculty members.

APPENDIX E: GROUP DIALOGUE AGENDA

Group Dialogue Meeting Agenda

1. Introduction and research update
2. Confidentiality agreement and trust / Informed Consents
3. Purpose: Doctoral Research (and possible follow-up)
4. Questions:
    a. What are the globalization trends (cf: Levin, 2001) affecting us?
    b. What are the implications/ changes in education?
    c. What are the implications for community colleges?
    d. What are the implications/changes that need to be considered for Liberal Arts in view of the above? (including role of faculty)?
    e. How would Liberal Arts faculty like to be approached/considered/involved in considering and making changes?
    f. What barriers might be anticipated? What facilitators might be addressed?

APPENDIX F: PARTICIPANT VERIFICATION REQUEST

24 November 2001

Dear Research Participant,

SUBJET: REFLECTIONS ON CHANGE: A DIALOGUE WITH FACULTY

Here is a brief profile of your participation in my study. I have included a short description of your background and experience to be used for contextual purposes only. Your pseudonym was chosen at random, from a pre-established list of names, and will be referred to only when necessary within the dissertation, to maintain confidentiality.

I have also included a list of quotations, taken from the transcript of our session, from which I may choose one or several to illustrate my findings. Obviously, I won't be able to use them all. But I would like to be prepared, since I plan to finish writing over the Christmas holidays.

Would you read over the information I have collected and make any corrections, revisions, or additions that you feel necessary to maintain the intent of your comments? I appreciate any insights you may have.

Please return the commented paper to me, via XXXXXXXXXX Room XXXX, in a sealed envelope. She is keeping them for me in a secure place until I pick them up on XXXXXX 2001. (Or you can mail them to my home address, if you prefer.) If I don't receive anything from you by that date, I'll assume everything is OK.

Thank you for your participation and your continuing support,

Katherine Zmetana

PS I'm attaching a list of questions I'll be using to organize the research data I've collected. If you have any thoughts you'd like to add, please feel free to do so. (Those of you who participated in the Group Dialogue Session have the added bonus of a summary of that session included as well.)

ORGANIZATION OF INTERVIEW FINDINGS

I am organizing my findings to answer the questions along the following themes:

- Change: What exactly are we talking about? (There's educational and organizational; first order and second order; there's mandated and naturally occurring; there's real and there's busy work.) What is the change that affects faculty and why?

- Education: Is it a business, a product, a process, or something else? Who really cares about quality anymore? What does the future hold? (Is there a future?) What role does quality play?

- Perceptions of Administration and Faculty Roles in Change: Are there really two sides? (maybe more?) Whose side are students on? Who's on the students' side? Is there any way we can be in this together?

- What do faculty want? Why should anyone care? (How to implement and manage education change in the community college.) What kind of leadership is needed?